THE AWARD-WINNING INDEPENDENT: EDITOR OF THE YEAR, CORRESPONDENT OF THE YEAR

THE INDEPENDENT

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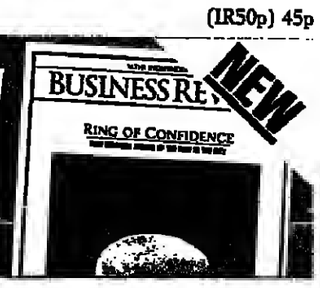
GERMAINE GREER ANSWERS YOUR QUESTIONS WEDNESDAY REVIEW FRONT

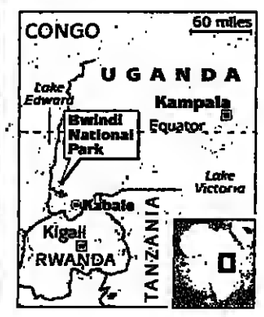
BUSINESS REVIEW

FREE INSIDE: 12-PAGE BROADSHEET MAGAZINE



Tourists raped and butchered in horrific act of revenge on Britain

Linda Adams from California, a hostage who got away by pretending to have an asthma attack, tells of her ordeal *George Mulala/Reuters*



BY LUCY HANNAN in Kampala
ANDREW BUNCOMBE, KIM SENGUPTA and ED O'LOUGHLIN in Nairobi

EIGHT WESTERN tourists, including four Britons, were raped, tortured, and butchered by their Hutu kidnappers yesterday in an horrific act of revenge against Britain and America.

Survivors of the Ugandan safari kidnapping said that the Hutus deliberately selected the British and Amercians tourists, releasing French and some other nationalities.

"The rebels were looking for Americans and British," said Hussein Kivumbi, manager of one of five camps raided by the Hutu rebels.

"They killed four women and four men with knives, machetes and axes. There were no gunshots. They wanted them to move fast; but some couldn't. So they killed with machetes one man and one woman who couldn't walk. Then they killed another three.

"There was no rescue. The soldiers found the bodies inside Congo, and then they found the six who were released and came down the mountain."

Captives who escaped said the execution-style killings came after the women had been raped.

Mr Kivumbi said the rebels left written messages on the massacred bodies, reading: "Americans and British, we don't want you on our land. You support our enemy Museveni."

The French deputy Ambassador to Uganda, Anne Peltier, was told by the kidnappers: "[We] are not happy with the Americans and British because they have preferred to support the Tutsi ethnic minority against the Hutu majority."

Last night Tony Blair, on a trip to Italy, called the killing "an act of wickedness simply beyond belief".

He pledged to do "everything in Britain's power to pursue justice".

Hours after Mme Peltier and the other freed tourists fled the Hutus murdered eight of their hostages. One American survivor, Mark Ross, said: "The ones I saw had their heads crushed and deep slashes with machetes."

They were killed the same way as most of the 800,000 Tutsis massacred by the Hutus in Rwanda in 1994.

Six tourists escaped, believed to be two Britons, an American, a Swiss woman, a New Zealander and a Canadian. They are in the Ugandan capital Kampala.

Last night one of dead Britons was named as Mark Lindgren, 23, a former university gradute from St Albans, Hertfordshire, on holiday in Uganda before starting his first job. A friend at the family home said: "We are absolutely devastated, the grief is enormous."

The High Commissioner in Kampala, Michael Cook, said: "Reports of clashes between the army and the rebels are still unconfirmed. Our concern now is with these survivors to see that they are physically well, as most of them are in a very traumatised state."

Last night the bodies of the victims lay in the Mulago hospital morgue in Kampala. Officials, assisted by the survivors, will positively identify them today. Relatives have been kept informed.

It is thought 31 tourists were initially abducted in co-ordinated raids at three camp sites at the Impenetrable Forest in the Bwindi National Park in south-western Uganda in the early hours on Monday. Four Ugandans – a game warden and three of his rangers – were killed as they tried to prevent the rebels from attacking the camp sites.

Yesterday Australian diplomatic sources told *The Independent* the rebels split their 14 remaining captives into three groups and led them into the forest. Five bodies were later found at one location and three in another.

The campsites were owned by three operators. One of the groups, Acacia Expeditions, from London, said 15 of its clients had "been involved". Spokeswoman Sue Ockland said four clients were "safe".

Last August four tourists, including a Briton, were kidnapped by Rwandan Hutu rebels. Three are still missing

INSIDE

'I escaped by faking asthma'

BY KIM SENGUPTA and ANDREW BUNCOMBE

"THANK GOD I took an acting class at school," said Linda Adams, who had managed to escape from Hutu guerrillas after she was captured in the early hours of Monday morning.

Ms Adams, 54, a Californian, had been freed by the interahamwe extremists after faking an asthma attack. Her quick thinking as the hostages were being marched at gunpoint up a mountain trail probably saved her from being tortured and hacked to death.

The gunmen came just as daylight was breaking over the Bwindi camp in the Impenetrable Forest on Monday. The attack was swift and deadly. The gunmen overran the guard post. The park rangers, half asleep and unprepared, had no chance against automatic rifle fire and grenades. Several were killed. The attackers then set the camp on fire.

The sound of gunfire woke the tourists in the Bwindi who had gone there to see the elusive mountain gorillas on the Rwandan border. The first one to wander out of her tent to find out what was going on, rubbing the sleep from her eyes, was Ms Adams. "The sound in the valley, the vibration was quite a shock. I got out of my tent and I walked around the corner – and then I got caught," she recalled back in Kampala yesterday, at the Sheraton hotel, a world away from the nightmare of what happened at Bwindi.

Ms Adams, of Alamo, southern California, was travelling alone. Her father had advised her against going because he was worried about her safety. She continued: "I saw gentlemen running with guns and four of them came over and grabbed me, all the money that I had, and told me to sit down. There was an older person leading them, he seemed quite calm. They all spoke French.

"After a while they brought

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

Argentine admits foul play over Beckham

BY GUY HODGSON

NOW IT can be revealed: the great villain of last year's sporting summer and *the man* overwhelmingly blamed for England's exit from the World Cup finals was probably more sinned against than sinning.

David Beckham, a hate figure for some since being sent off against Argentina in the second round of France 98, received an apology of sorts yesterday when Diego Simeone, involved in the incident that led to the dismissal, admitted he conned the referee. With timing that would have brought an admiring nod from Machiavelli, he admitted exaggerating his injury when Beckham flicked out a foot at him in St Etienne.

That they meet again for the first time tonight when Manchester United play Internazionale of Milan in the quarter-finals of the Champions League is, of course, irrelevant.

"Let's just say the referee fell into the trap," Simeone said. "It was a difficult one for him to have avoided because I went down well ... You could say my falling transformed a yellow card into a red card but in fact the most appropriate punishment was a yellow one. In reality it wasn't a violent blow, it was just a little kick back with no force behind it and was probably instinctive. The referee was right there ... and probably punished that intention to retaliate."

Effigies of Beckham have been burnt outside some grounds and he has been the victim of abuse from opposing supporters in every game he has played. At one stage it was feared he would have to be transferred to a foreign club to escape the vitriol.

Which is unlikely to make Simeone's sympathy easy to accept. "In England they wanted to put all the blame on Beckham but they had just as good a chance of knocking us out. And it certainly wasn't his fault; we were better and luckier in the penalty shoot-out. We're talking about a player who ... is excellent and has a truly great future ahead of him."

The reaction Simeone expects tonight? "I might get whistled," he replied, "but if that happened the English fans would only make me happy. I adore it when rival fans whistle at me. It really fires me up."

In that case he should be a very happy man at Old Trafford.

INSIDE THIS SECTION

INSIDE THE REVIEW

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Employer must pay injury benefits

BY ANDREW GRICE
Political Editor

THE GOVERNMENT plans to force employers to pay benefits to people who suffer injury or illness as a result of their work.

Alistair Darling, the Social Security Secretary, is modernising the industrial injuries scheme, which costs taxpayers £750m a year. He wants companies to meet the cost of future claims by taking out insurance.

The move will provoke a row with business leaders, who already pay £730m a year in compensation and legal costs for injuries found to be their fault.

Despite Tony Blair's strenuous efforts to woo industry, bosses are increasingly worried that the Government is imposing higher costs on companies through the national minimum wage, the EU social chapter of workers rights, greater recognition rights for trade unions and the Working Families' Tax Credit scheme for the low-paid.

Mr Darling is expected to set out his proposals in a consultation document shortly. Legislation could follow in the Parliamentary session starting in November.

He believes the 50-year-old state system was designed for a very different social and industrial climate and wants to better protection for today's workforce.

Mr Darling will argue that a switch to private insurance would encourage employers to adopt good health and safety practice, since those causing few accidents or illnesses would pay lower premiums.

The number of people receiving industrial injuries disablement benefit has risen from 212,000 to 347,000 during the past six years, and the budget has gone from £660m to £750m in two years.

Under his plans, the Government would continue to fund the benefits –worth up to £104.70 a week – to existing claimants, but employers would finance future payments.

The shake-up is backed by the Treasury, keen to reduce the £100bn-a-year welfare budget by more private insurance.

The plan was welcomed last night by Frank Field, who resigned as Minister for Welfare Reform last summer.

"At the moment, taxpayers are paying for employers who ruin people's lives," said Mr Field. "This would only be a burden that business would generate for itself. It could make a real difference to the rate of accidents."

The Trade Union Congress has welcomed Mr Darling's review but is anxious to ensure the changes would not reduce rights of workers to sue employers for work-related accidents or illnesses. It believes this could breach the European Convention on Human Rights.

A confidential TUC document said: "Employers who cause injury or illness should be punished through a range of measures, from custodial sentences in cases such as corporate manslaughter to financial penalties such as fines, punitive and ordinary damages, recovery of NHS and benefit costs, and increased insurance premiums."

Tony Blair in Milan yesterday, praising America's economic reforms and urging Europe to 'permanent revolution' *Paulo Coco/Reuters*

Blair: Europe should emulate US

BY ANDREW GRICE

TONY BLAIR was on a collision course with fellow European Union leaders last night after urging them to adopt his strategy of "permanent revolution" and to emulate America's economic miracle.

The Prime Minister told a meeting of socialist leaders, who hold power in 11 of the EU's 15 member states, they must not squander their opportunity by slipping back to traditional left-wing economic policies. Mr Blair said the European social model should be "modernised" to allow EU countries to compete in the global economy. This directly contradicted Lionel Jospin, the French Prime Minister, who earlier told the Milan conference there should be a European pact for jobs and growth involving governments, employers and trade unions.

But Mr Blair insisted that "demand-side policies of economic management" were no longer a sufficient guarantee of prosperity, and there was a "vital need" for economic reform.

The Prime Minister said the single currency "can be a force for stability" but added: "It's only a foundation. Alongside it must come real economic reform that tackles the fundamental supply-side weakness of the European economy."

He insisted his call for reform did not mean he was opposed to social justice. But he argued that Europe was not delivering that – pointing to high unemployment, rising welfare costs and social exclusion.

Mr Blair's strong endorsement of America's economic strategy will anger some EU leaders, already uneasy over his co-operation with President Clinton on foreign policy.

He said Europe needed a dialogue with the Democratic Party, so the EU and US could learn from each other.

Mr Blair insisted that his "third way" between old-style socialism and right-wing policies was rooted in the centre-left. "It is the means that have changed. Enterprise and fairness used to be seen as in competition. Today they must be seen as partners."

The Prime Minister warned: "We must go further, we must be bolder and we must do it with definition and confidence. If we don't, make no mistake: the right will move in to the ground we vacate. It is not enough to be parties of social justice. We must also be parties with the vision of the future our people understand and can be inspired by."

Michael Howard, the shadow foreign secretary, accused Mr Blair of "saying one thing in Britain while doing another in Europe". He criticised his "Trappist silence" on the political dimension of the single currency, and said the EU socialist meeting had agreed a manifesto which would "take Europe down the path of more red tape and more regulation".

Ken Livingstone, Review, page 4

Labour faces racism claim

BY NEIL RAFFERTY

THE LABOUR Party in Scotland is facing a court claim of racism, it was confirmed yesterday.

A former Strathclyde Labour councillor has launched an action at Glasgow Sheriff Court to sue the party for racial discrimination.

Neelam Bakshi, former councillor for Maryhill and Summerston, is claiming £20,000 in damages after being rejected from Labour's approved list of candidates for the Scottish Parliament.

Ms Bakshi, who now works for Fife Council, claims she was not told why she was rejected and was given no opportunity to appeal.

A Labour spokesman confirmed that the Party had been served with a writ but added that the claims were "ludicrous". He said: "She did have an appeal and the appeal was unsuccessful. A number of candidates did request and have meetings and we gave them feedback on the selection process, but she did not ask for one." The spokesman added: "Our system was open, democratic and fair."

Ms Bakshi, a councillor from 1990 to 1996, said that her case was being backed by the Commission for Racial Equality.

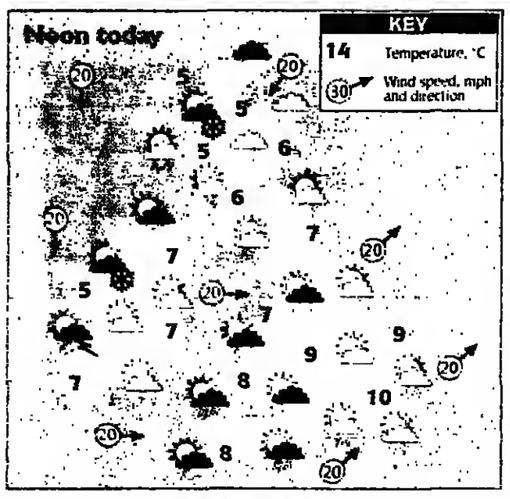
She added that although she did appeal against the selection panel decision she was given no explanation for her original rejection or for the failure of her subsequent appeal.

Ms Bakshi has won a previous racial discrimination case against Falkirk Council. The Commission for Racial Equality confirmed they had backed Ms Bakshi in the case in April 1996. But Ms Bakshi, who is still a member of the Labour Party, said it was a condition of the settlement that she was not allowed to talk publicly about the case.

She added: "I do not make a habit of bringing race discrimination cases."

Glasgow Sheriff Court said no hearing date had been fixed.

BRITAIN TODAY



FORECAST

General situation: England and Wales will be fresher than yesterday with sunny spells and showers. There will be strong winds in the south-west and along the English Channel. The showers will be heaviest in the west and some of them may be thundery. The showers may become prolonged in the north. Northern Ireland, together with northern and western Scotland will be cold and windy with frequent heavy showers. The showers slowly turning wintry. Eastern Scotland will be a little milder and less windy but there will be rain at times.

London, SE & Cent S England, E Anglia, E England: Rather windy, especially on the south coast. Sunny breaks but also some sharp showers. A strong south-west wind. Max temp 9-11C (48-52F)

Channel Is, SW England, Wales: Very windy with limited sunny spells and frequent heavy showers. A strong south-west wind. Max temp 7-9C (45-46F)

Midlands, NW & Cent N England, Lake Dist, Isle of Man: Heavy showers, some thundery and perhaps more prolonged this afternoon. A moderate westerly wind. Max temp 7-10C (45-50F)

NE England: Mostly cloudy with a few showers, perhaps with a longer spell of rain late. A moderate north to north-west wind. Max temp 6-8C (43-46F)

NE & SE Scotland, Edinburgh, Aberdeen, N Isles: Only very limited bright spells, with most parts keeping a lot of cloud with rain breaking out at times. A light to moderate north to north-easterly wind. Max temp 5-7C (41-45F)

NW & SW Scotland, Glasgow, W Isles: Windy with showers, many heavy and thundery with sleet and snow. A strong north wind. Max temp 5-7C (41-45F).

N Ireland: Very windy with showers, some thundery or with hail. A strong to gale force north to north-west wind. Max temp 5-8C (41-46F).

OUTLOOK

Thursday and Friday will see sunshine and showers. The showers will turn increasingly to sleet and snow in Scotland tomorrow, with wintry weather extending further south by Friday. Sheltered parts of the south will have the best of any sunshine.

TRAVEL

London: A12 Green Man Roundabout, Levtonstone. Major roadworks on new A11 link road. Until 31st December
Bristol: M5 J18-19 Mokw Roadworks on Avonmouth Bridge. Until 23rd June 2000.
Warwickshire: M42 Between J10 Tamworth services and J9 Sutton Coldfield. Roadworks and contraflow. Until 23rd April
South Yorkshire: M1 Between J34 Tinsley Viaduct (A6178) & J34 Tinsley Viaduct (A6178) Sheffield. Carriageway is reduced to two lanes southbound. Until 21st November 2000.
Gloucestershire: A40 Lansdown Rd, Cheltenham. Closed due to roadworks inbound. Diversions in place. Until 1st June
Co.Antrim: A1 Kingsway, Dunmurray. Roadworks, various lane restrictions. Until 1st August.
Derbyshire: A6 Between Derby Southern Bypass (A50) and Shadow Road Roundabout. East of Alvaston. Contraflow for work on new A50. Until 15th October
AA Roadwatch: Call **0336 401777** for the latest local and national traffic news. Source: The Automobile Association. Calls charged at 50p per min (inc VAT)

LIGHTING UP

Belfast	6.03pm	to	7.07am
Birmingham	5.49pm	to	6.48am
Bristol	5.53pm	to	6.50am
Glasgow	5.55pm	to	7.02am
London	5.44pm	to	6.40am
Manchester	5.50pm	to	6.51am
Newcastle	5.45pm	to	6.50am

HIGH TIDES

	AM	HT	PM	HT
Avonmouth	8.00	13.4	8.21	13.4
Cork	6.20	4.4	6.34	4.3
Devonport	6.33	5.4	6.59	5.2
Dover	11.49	6.5	-	-
Dun Laoghaire	12.06	4.0	12.19	4.3
Falmouth	6.10	5.1	6.30	5.0
Greenock	1.23	3.2	1.14	3.5
Harwich	12.21	3.9	12.42	3.9
Holyhead	11.05	5.7	11.25	5.5
Hull (Albert Dk)	7.04	8.5	7.11	8.9
Kings Lynn	7.04	6.6	7.07	6.8
Leith	3.15	5.5	3.36	5.6
Liverpool	-	-	12.03	9.5
Milford Haven	6.58	7.0	7.17	6.9
Newquay	5.40	7.0	6.08	6.9
Portland	7.43	2.0	8.12	1.9
Portsmouth	11.54	4.5	-	-
Pwllheli	5.49	5.0	9.08	4.9
Scarborough	4.50	5.6	4.59	5.8
Wick	-	-	12.06	3.7

Height measured in metres

AIR QUALITY
Today's readings

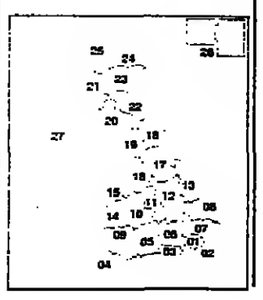
	NO_2	SO_2
London	Moderate	Good
S England	Good	Good
Wales	Good	Good
C England	Good	Good
N England	Moderate	Good
Scotland	Moderate	Good
N Ireland	Good	Good

SUN & MOON

Sun rises: 06.45
Sun sets: 17.44
Moon rises: 19.09
Moon sets: 07.25
Last Quarter: March

WEATHERLINE

For the latest forecast call **0891 500[illegible]** followed by the two digits for your area. Source: The Met. Office. Calls charged at 50p per min (inc VAT)



YESTERDAY

EXTREMES

Warmest: London 16C (61F)
Coldest (day): Kirkwall 4C (39F)
Wettest: Capel Curig 30.0mm
Sunniest: Fort William 2.0 hrs

For 24hrs to 2pm Tuesday

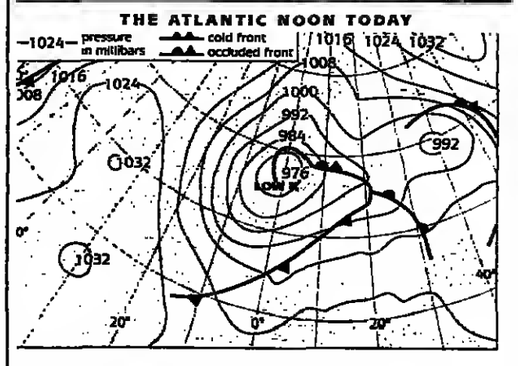
	Sun hrs	Rain mm	Max °C	°F
Aberdeen	6.9	0	9	48
Anglesey	0	6.3	11	52
Aviemore	7.2	0.5	7	45
Belfast	0.8	7.9	8	46
Birmingham	1.1	4.8	14	57
Bournemouth	0	3.8	13	55
Bristol	0	14.2	11	52
Buxton	0	33.8	10	50
Cardiff	0	6.1	11	52
Clacton	1.3	2.8	13	55
Cromer	1.1	7.1	13	55
Edinburgh	4.3	0.8	8	46
Exmouth	1.0	0.5	14	57
Fishguard	0	5.6	11	52
Folkestone	0	4.3	12	54
Glasgow	3.3	6.1	8	46
Hastings	0	8.4	11	52
Hove	0	4.3	10	50
Isle-of-man	2.7	12.2	9	48
Isle-of-wight	-	4.8	12	54
Jersey	0	3.6	12	54
Kendal	1.9	12.2	9	48
Leeds	2.8	5.1	12	54
Lerwick	5.5	3.8	5	41
Littlehampton	0	7.6	12	54
London	0	3.8	14	57
Lowestoft	0.9	6.6	14	57
Manchester	0	11.2	12	54
Margate	0.2	1.6	14	57
Morecambe	3.5	11.2	9	48
Newcastle	4.4	8.1	10	50
Newquay	0	11.7	11	52
Norwich	0.7	8.1	14	57
Oxford	1.5	2.8	15	59
Ross-on-wye	0.1	1.5	14	57
Salcombe	-	-	-	-
Scarborough	1.7	10.9	11	52
Shrewsbury	2.3	1.0	14	57
Southend	0	1.5	13	55
Southport	-	10.4	11	52
Stornoway	6.3	4.8	8	46
Swanage	0.7	6.9	12	54
Tenby	0	7.4	12	54
Torquay	3.4	4.8	15	59
Weston-s-mare	-	-	-	-
Weymouth	0.6	2.8	12	54

24 hours to 6pm (GMT) Monday: Information by PA WeatherCentre

THE WORLD

EUROPE NOON TODAY

THE ATLANTIC NOON TODAY



High R will slowly decline in-situ but High P will slip south-eastwards. Low K will edge only gradually east, but it will begin to fill.

THE WORLD YESTERDAY

c.cloudy; dr.drizzle; f.fair; fg.fog; h.hail; hz.hazy; m.mist; r.rain; s.sunny; sh.showers; sl.sleet; sn.snow; ss.sandstorm; th.thunder. Most recent available figure, noon local time.

		°C	°F			°C	°F			°C	°F			°C	°F
Adelaide	c	25	77	Chicago	c	4	39	Kuala Lumpur	c	30	86	Port Stanley	c	16	61
Algiers	c	14	57	Christchurch	s	19	66	La Paz	c	12	54	Prague	r	8	46
Alicante	s	17	63	Cologne	r	11	52	Lagos	c	32	90	Quebec	r	3	37
Amsterdam	r	9	48	Copenhagen	f	6	43	Lima	c	26	79	Reykjavik	f	1	34
Anchorage	sn	-6	21	Corfu	f	14	57	Lisbon	f	16	61	Rhodes	s	16	61
Ankara	c	14	57	Crete	s	15	59	Los Angeles	c	18	64	Rio de Jan	c	30	86
Athens	s	17	63	Dakar	s	20	68	Madrid	s	14	57	Riyadh	s	21	20
Atlanta	s	15	59	Dallas	s	20	66	Majorca	s	16	61	Rome	c	14	57
Auckland	c	20	68	Darwin	c	31	88	Malaga	s	17	63	San Fran	f	13	55
Bahrain	s	22	72	Dubai	c	25	77	Malta	f	17	63	Santiago	c	20	68
Bangkok	s	33	91	Dublin	c	11	52	Manila	c	27	81	Seoul	s	10	50
Barbados	f	29	84	Edmonton	sn	-4	25	Mecca	s	30	86	Seychelles	f	30	66
Barcelona	s	15	59	Faro	s	18	64	Melbourne	t	25	77	Shanghai	r	11	52
Beirut	s	18	64	Florence	m	12	54	Mexico City	s	22	72	Singapore	c	25	77
Belgrade	c	13	55	Frankfurt	r	11	52	Miami	f	22	72	St Pet'burg	m	-1	30
Berlin	f	7	45	Funchal	f	17	63	Milan	s	13	55	Stockholm	sn	2	36
Bermuda	f	21	70	Geneva	c	12	54	Montreal	r	1	34	Sydney	c	25	77
Biarritz	c	14	57	Gibraltar	s	12	54	Moscow	sn	0	32	Tel Aviv	s	18	64
Bogota	f	16	61	Hanoi	c	24	75	Munich	r	8	46	Tenerife	f	22	72
Bombay	f	33	91	Harare	c	26	79	Nairobi	f	28	82	Tokyo	s	14	57
Bordeaux	c	14	57	Helsinki	sn	1	34	Naples	m	15	59	Toronto	c	3	37
Boston	c	8	46	Hong Kong	f	22	72	Nassau	f	24	75	Tunis	f	18	64
Brisbane	dr	25	77	Honolulu	s	26	79	New Delhi	f	25	77	Ulan Bde	c	-11	12
Brussels	c	12	54	Istanbul	s	12	54	New Orleans	s	23	73	Valencia	s	20	68
Bucharest	s	14	57	Jakarta	s	28	82	New York	r	7	45	Vancouver	c	8	46
Budapest	f	13	55	Jeddah	s	28	63	Nice	f	15	59	Venice	m	8	46
Buenos Aires	f	30	86	Jerusalem	c	13	55	Nicosia	s	19	66	Vienna	c	11	52
Cairo	s	17	63	Johannesburg	f	30	86	Oslo	c	3	37	Warsaw	c	5	41
Calgary	c	2	36	Karachi	f	29	84	Paris	c	13	55	Washington	c	8	46
Cape Town	s	24	75	Kathmandu	s	20	68	Perth	s	26	79	Wellington	f	19	66
Caracas	s	29	84	Kiev	sn	5	41	Peking	s	9	46	Zagreb	-		
Casablanca	s	17	63	Kingston	s	28	82					Zurich	c	10	50

RAIN OR SHINE...

RUSSIA'S Far Eastern provinces were battered by 100mph winds yesterday, leaving at least 19 towns and villages without power and heat at the coldest time of the year.

The storms brought down power lines supplying hundreds of homes across Sakhalin Island and the Kuril archipelago. Winds tore off nearly every roof in the Shakhtyorsk township, on the west coast of Sakhalin, and rescuers are unable to reach the areas because of heavy snow.

UK 'ignored' over Unscom spying theory

BY DAVID USBORNE AND PATRICK COCKBURN

BRITAIN'S INTELLIGENCE chiefs became suspicious almost two years ago that the United States was covertly using Unscom, the United Nations special commission on disarming Iraq, to spy on Saddam Hussein, but were turned away when they sought confirmation from their counterparts Washington, it was reported yesterday.

It was said that the US not only dispatched agents to infiltrate Unscom's operations but that everybody was kept in the dark about what was happening, including the leadership of Unscom.

In early 1997 British signals intelligence intercepted and decoded an intriguing message from an Iranian spy in Baghdad to his superiors in Iran. He said that when US U-2 spy planes flew over Iraq there was often an unexplained burst of transmissions from the ground. It speculated that the Americans were using the UN weapons inspectors' headquarters in Baghdad as cover for their own espionage operation.

The Iranian agent's theory created interest in Britain's General Communications Headquarters, in charge of collecting and decoding radio signals. It asked its American counterpart, the National Security Agency, in Maryland, for an explanation.

It did not provide one. "We don't tell the British everything, even if they are our closest intelligence ally," one US official was quoted as saying in yesterday's *Washington Post*. "They don't tell us everything they are doing either."

According to the *Washington Post* the Central Intelligence Agency and other American intelligence services systematically infiltrated its agents and equipment over three years into Unscom teams on arms control in order to intercept Iraqi military communications.

The newspaper, quoting unnamed sources, reported that US intelligence services sent technical experts to rig Unscom equipment and offices without permission to enable the interception of ordinary Iraqi military communications, that were of considerable interest to Washington but of no interest to Unscom. Britain began asking questions when its operatives intercepted the radio communication sent by the Iranian spy and challenged the US in May 1997.

The White House yesterday insisted that America's only interest in Unscom was to help it unearth weapons. "Everything the United States did was to support Unscom in its effort to break Iraq's concealment of its weapons of mass destruction," a spokesman said.

Richard Butler, the chairman of Unscom, refused to comment.

هكذا من الاصل

African rebels who revel in their machete genocide

Soldiers of the Rwandan Patriotic Army heading into the bush on a patrol in the north-west of Rwanda near the border with Uganda *John Voos*

BY MARY BRAID

THE HUTU rebels' trademark is death by machete. Five years ago the same murderous militiamen were raping, hacking and bludgeoning their way across Rwanda, at the vanguard of the genocide in which at least 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus died.

The nationwide killing spree lasted 100 days.

Called the interahamwe, which means those who stand together, the Hutu extremists of Rwanda attempted their own Final Solution on their fellow countrymen, the minority Tutsis.

To hold on to control of a country that was set to switch to power-sharing between Hutus (85 per cent of the population) and Tutsis – they engineered a campaign of mass murder.

For months leading up to the massacres the Interahamwe distributed racist propaganda against the "cockroaches" (the Tutsis). Playing on the Hutus' deep-rooted sense of inferiority, they convinced them that their very survival depending on eliminating the other side.

On the evening the Hutu president Juvenal Habyarimana, died in a mysterious plane crash, the first wave of killings began. The interahamwe organised road blocks at which terrified Tutsis were stopped, asked to produce their identity cards – on which ethnicity had been recorded since colonial times – and then them led away or hacked them to death on the spot with farm implements and machetes.

The killing did not break out everywhere at once. While some Hutus were happy to take up the machete and the gun against their neighbours, and even relatives and spouses, others were understandably reluctant to kill. Even in the prevailing culture of obedience – where what the headman said was slavishly followed – some villages held out against the madness. But the interahamwe roamed the country, stoking the fire, keeping mass murder going.

They led by threat and by example. They were never slow to lift a machete and hack a child to death, or to rape a young girl after forcing her to witness the murder of her family. Reluctant Hutus – adults and children – were shown just how easily it was done.

When millions of Hutu refugees – led, post-genocide, into exile in the Democratic Republic of Congo (then Zaire) by their leaders – returned to Rwanda in 1996, the interahamwe had to stay behind. They sent their children home alone. They were easy to spot. Sad, bewildered little souls carried along by the crowd.

But Rwanda's jails were already bursting with 130,000 men and women implicated in the genocide. The architects of mass murder could never return home.

So they have remained in Congo, launching regular attacks across the border. The threat they continue to present to Rwanda has already caused two regional wars.

They have grown more and more audacious, creeping across the Congolese border and infiltrating north-west Rwanda, the traditional Hutu homeland. It was a nightmare for local Hutus. Caught between a frustrated Rwandan army and the Hutu thugs, civilians have been murdered by both sides.

Last year interahamwe attacks were spreading across Rwanda, even closing on the capital, Kigali. There was panic. And late last year the government fought back.

With a combination of military attacks, and a campaign to win over the local Hutu population, the Rwandan army has successfully flushed out many of the extremists. Controversially, the government is currently moving 600,000 Hutus from their isolated hillside homes into villages. It says it is doing this to protect civilians. But it is also a method of social control, allowing its forces to separate Hutu insurgents from the local population.

Success within its own borders has displaced the murderers, who are becoming more and more desperate. More are holed up in Congo, where Rwandan troops are hunting them down, and hiding in the wilder parts of south-west Uganda from where the Western tourists were abducted this week.

Reports that Americans and Britons were singled out by the Hutu militiamen who struck in Uganda's Bwindi National Park are gruesome. They echo the selection of all those hopeless Tutsis for death by machete in 1994.

Yesterday Anne Peltier, France's deputy ambassador to Uganda, who escaped the attack, relayed another message from the kidnappers. The interahamwe were unhappy with America and Britain for supporting Rwanda's new Tutsi-led government "against the ethnic Hutu majority".

Ms Peltier, had managed to negotiate the freeing of hostages of other nationalities.

Rwanda's government is undoubtedly led by the minority Tutsis. That is not the democratic ideal but then this is a country where the majority tried to wipe out their minority countrymen. And the government can claim to be attempting reconciliation. More than half its ministers are moderate Hutus.

America and Britain strongly support the new regime, filling a diplomatic gap left by the French. France was a strong supporter of the Hutu government which presided over the genocide, and its troops stand accused of helping tens of thousand of Hutu murderers escape into exile in Congo after the killings in the infamous Operatioo Turquoise.

France is hated by the new Rwandan regime. And the Hutu extremists, who continue to incite Hutus to rise up and complete the genocide, hate the British and Americans for supporting the new government.

The murders in Bwindi Park are power to the Rwandan regime's refusal to negotiate with the desperate remnants of the Hutu militias who all but destroyed the country in 1994.

The only "political" objective of the interahamwe seems to be the completion of its Final Solution. The Rwandan government compares speaking to the interahamwe to asking the Jews to negotiate with the Nazis in the Second World War. On yesterday's showing, who would disagree?

Cook's statement, page 8

Foreign Office 'was right' in not issuing a warning

BY ANDREW BUNCOMBE

UNTIL YESTERDAY'S tragic events, Uganda had positioned itself among a group of countries offering tourists adventure holidays that reach the upper limits of what is risky and exhilarating, without tipping over into the life-threatening.

In shunning mass-market destinations, visitors to such countries undoubtedly see themselves as explorers rather than tourists. Uganda had cornered the market by being able to offer possible sightings of rare mountain gorillas, in its Impenetrable Forest National Park. The only other places the gorillas may be seen – the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda – are already off-limits as sensible destinations.

Now south-west Uganda is included in those parts of the world that are "out of bounds". Following the kidnappings in Uganda, the Foreign Office updated its advice on the country, warning travellers to stay away from the border areas with the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda.

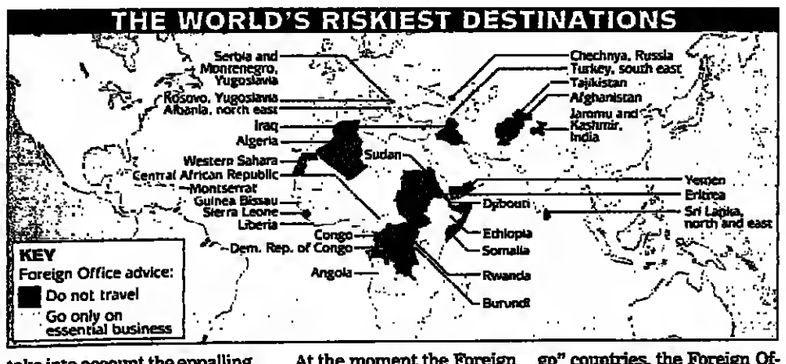
Yesterday, Foreign Office minister Baroness Symons said: "The advice we have put out on this obviously has had to take into account the appalling incident that has happened and we have advised against all travel to the border area."

She said the Foreign Office had been correct in not previously issuing a blanket warning against travelling to the area.

"The Foreign Office advice has to be based on facts. Foreign Office advice was that rebels have been periodically active in this area, although recently the situation has been peaceful.

"We did say this can change very quickly and that anybody who wanted to travel up-country should seek advice from our High Commission. That was factually correct advice."

THE WORLD'S RISKIEST DESTINATIONS



At the moment the Foreign Office's consular division lists 17 countries, or provinces within countries, where it expressly advises against all travel.

Some of these, such as Afghanistan, Algeria and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, are obvious danger spots. Others, such as the western Sahara and Sri Lanka, are less obvious.

All, however, are deemed too dangerous for travel as a result of civil conflicts and, in some cases – such as that of Chechnya – the Foreign Office considers them so dangerous that it does not even base any officials there.

In addition to these 17 "no-go" countries, the Foreign Office lists a number of places which it advises people not to travel to unless on "essential business". These include Angola and Rwanda.

Like the Foreign Office, private international security firms, such as Control Risks, provide advice for companies operating in the developing world.

"We update the situations in 120 countries on a daily basis," said Mara McNeil Sinclairs, head of business development at Control Risks.

"This is done from a range of information – people on the ground, news reports, as well as our specialist knowledge."

My escape from the Hutus

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

some other captives from the other camps, marched them up and asked them what nationality they were, if they were British or American.

"The group holding the British people treated them quite badly. A British guy was sitting next to me, but I didn't dare make a lot of eye contact with him so I just looked down. I could see he had purple toenails from being beaten. The rebels holding my group were not very hostile. They had me at gunpoint, but when they looted my cabin they actually gave me my glasses, passport and ticket when I asked for them.

"We were being marched up the hill and after a while I faked an asthma attack. I started coughing. I took out an inhaler and started using it. I was taking a risk but I thought it was worth it.

"One of the group leaders then spoke to them in French and explained my problem. I don't know why they let me go. They could have shot me, but they didn't. I also asked for my shoes and they gave them to me. But the British people were being forced to walk barefoot. They were quite a young group.

"They were really after the British and the Americans. There was a man with dual British and American nationality who was asked where he was from, he said he was Australian. There was also a woman who was Swiss who said she was a Swiss national. This seemed to cause confusion as these people [the guerrillas] did not seem to know about Australia and Switzerland. They were both released.

"I was just glad to get out. I did not really have time to be scared. It was only afterwards it hit me how bad it was."

Another American woman, Elizabeth Garland, who had been working as a gorilla researcher, also described the horror of the attack. "There were explosions and a lot of gunfire. The rebels were speaking French and Kinyarwanda, a local dialect.

"They did not make any demands but they talked about why they were interested in taking American and British hostages – because of the American and Anglo-Saxon backing for the Tutsi minority government over the Hutu majority in Rwanda."

Ms Garland managed to hide in the bush and returned to Kampala on Monday evening with the others who had been freed by the interahamwe.

Gaddafi says a Lockerbie deal is 'near'

BY PAUL LASHMAR

THE LIBYAN leader, Colonel Muammar Gaddafi, yesterday made his clearest statement so far that he is prepared to hand over two Lockerbie bombing suspects. In an unusually positive statement he said: "A final agreement is near. I ask the Libyan people to trust South African President Nelson Mandela and Saudi Arabia, who asked us to accept [the deal].

"In fact Mandela's word is for me stronger than a Security Council resolution ... and I have a written letter signed by [Saudi] Crown Prince Abdullah with assurances."

The United Nations is currently awaiting Col Gaddafi's decision whether to hand the men over for trial by Scottish judges in a special court in the Netherlands. In his speech, broadcast live by Libyan television, Col Gaddafi added: "It is not possible to doubt the fairness of a Scottish court, because it would not be exposed to pressures from intelligence services nor to a British Government order over whatever ruling. It would not include jurors and would sit in the Netherlands not in Britain."

In the broadcast, Col Gaddafi said a Saudi envoy had arrived in Libya yesterday and that President Mandela and the Egyptian President, Hosni Mubarak, had spoken to him as part of international efforts to reach a deal on Lockerbie.

However one diplomat in the region said that Col Gaddafi still seemed undecided over whether to surrender the two men, Abdel Basset al-Megrahi and Lamen Khalifa Fhimah, who are accused of placing a bomb aboard Pan Am flight 103 which exploded above Lockerbie on 12 December, 1988.

Dr Jim Swire, a spokesman for the British families of those killed in the bombing said yesterday: "This looks very promising. This is Gaddafi himself spontaneously agreeing that agreement is near.

"It is very encouraging that he is saying to the Libyan people that the reassurances of Mandela, the Saudis and the Egyptians should encourage them to accept." But Dr Swire pointed out that the statement had been through several translations and advised some caution. "He hasn't said what he means by 'near'. But it is all very promising." A Foreign Office spokesman said, "We hope the suspects will now be handed over. We have done all we can to persuade Libya that there is no hidden agenda."

Reports at the weekend that Britain and America had given Libya a 30-day deadline to hand over the two suspects in the Lockerbie bombing case have been denied. Dr Swire, had initially said that the deadline was "very unhelpful" but now says he believes that claims of such a deadline were media "spin" from New York. "I have spoken to the Foreign Office at some length," he said "and they have assured me it is not a 30 day deadline."

The Foreign Office said the 30 day timeframe was not a deadline but "a reasonable period of time" in which to respond. The reports followed a letter sent late last week by the UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, to Col Gaddafi.

After a number of concessions in recent weeks the Libyans have yet to make a final decision but yesterday's speech suggests Col Gaddafi may soon agree to hand the two men over.

Pupils from New End Primary, London, at yesterday's launch at St John's, Smith Square, of Schoolsong 2000, for school choirs *John Voos*

Skin expert warns of sunbed danger

BY JEREMY LAURANCE
Health Editor

A LEADING skin specialist warned yesterday that UV-powered sunbeds could cause permanent damage to the skin and said he would call for them to be banned if they were not already so widespread.

Professor John Hawk, consultant dermatologist at St Thomas' Hospital in London, said up to 60 per cent of people using sunbeds twice a week for more than two years could be at risk of skin cancer and other complaints.

Speaking at the launch of a Health Education Authority campaign on the risks of sunbeds, Professor Hawk said a ban on sunbeds was "impossible at present" because, "there are huge commercial pressures from the manufacturers who have a lot of influence".

Sunbed manufacturers dismissed his claims, saying that sunbeds were still safer than natural tanning outdoors.

Professor Hawk said: "Sunbeds have only been around for 20 years and it can take up to 20 to 30 years for skin cancers to develop." He added: "We have been told for years that sunbeds are safe but they are not."

A Health Education Authority survey found more than three million people in the UK had used a sunbed in the past year.

Manufacturers insisted that strict safeguards meant their products were safe to use. A statement from The Sunbed Association said: "Obtaining a suntan ... through the sensible use of a sunbed, is undoubtedly a more responsible approach to getting a suntan than overexposure to natural sunlight."

More than 40,000 people are diagnosed with skin cancer each year; 2,000 die from the disease.

Beef ban may not be lifted until June

BY STEPHEN CASTLE
in Brussels

THE WORLD-WIDE export ban on British beef will stay in place at least until summer, because of government delays in meeting the conditions to which it agreed last year.

Despite the fanfare which greeted the decision in principle to lift the embargo, officials believe June is the earliest exports could resume, several months later than predicted. And the Conservatives said the emergence of a letter from the Chief Veterinary Officer raised the possibility that the Prime Minister had misled the Commons on the issue last week.

Last Wednesday Tony Blair said the UK had "of course invited the inspectors" but an invitation from the Chief Veterinary Officer, James Scudamore, appears to have been faxed to the European Commission the following day. It suggests the inspection team may be invited during the week of 29 March or 5 April, the first step in a process expected to take two months.

Under the deal the Government has to invite EU inspectors to verify that all the conditions are in place. They are stringent enough to deter almost all abattoirs, because those which want to export meat must devote their work exclusively to that market. They also need to put in place a tracking system for cattle which proves they were born after August 1996, the date by which contaminated foodstuff had been banned in the UK.

Inspectors will have to compile a report to be discussed by the Commission. That will be followed by consideration by the Standing Veterinary Committee, followed by a proposal from the Commission, expected to result in lifting the ban.

In the letter Mr Scudamore asked for the normal 25-day period for drawing up the report to be condensed to 10 days.

Yesterday the Commission said the slippage was due to the Government, adding: "The ball has been in their court."

Another official refused to confirm whether the 10-day procedure would be adopted, adding: "There is an emergency procedure. Sometimes we follow that procedure, sometimes we do not."

Whatever the timing, the quantity of beef exported when the ban is lifted is likely to be tiny, because the Government has found few abattoirs interested in trying to rebuild export markets. With consumer resistance to British beef high, few abattoirs feel that the investment is justified.

Tim Yeo, shadow agriculture minister, said: "It is three months since the much-trumpeted announcement that the ban was being lifted and it is going to be at least another three months before exports take place. There is also a question about whether the ... Commons was misled."

A spokesman for the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food said that "one or two" abattoirs had been identified for inspectors to visit.

■ The hotel in Newport where the Prince of Wales was served banned beef on the bone suffered another blow when its head chef resigned yesterday. Eddie Fitzpatrick joined the hotel as executive chef from the Ritz Carlton in Barcelona a few weeks ago.

Although he did not prepare the beef, he supervised all the chefs at the hotel, including Trefor Jones, who cooked the joint so publicly sampled by Prince Charles and the Secretary of State for Wales, Alun Michael.

The hotel has apologised for any "embarrassment" caused to the Prince of Wales and Mr Michael, who said they had inadvertently eaten the meat, but it has not staved off possible prosecution by environment health officers, who have launched an investigation into the incident.

IN BRIEF

Displaced islanders to sue Britain

ISLANDERS FROM the Indian Ocean, protesting against their removal from their homes 30 years ago to make way for an American military base, are taking the British Government to the High Court. They were moved from the British territory of Diego Garcia in the late Sixties.

Boys of 13 on rape charge

TWO boys aged 13 have been charged with raping a girl of 12, police said yesterday. They have been given conditional bail and are to appear at Doncaster youth court on 1 April. The charges follow an alleged incident in Lakeside Boulevard, Doncaster, on 20 February.

No prosecution for riot death

NO ONE should be prosecuted for the death of a woman during a riot on a housing estate in Lincoln last September, the Crown Prosecution Service announced yesterday. A police woman had been accused of hitting Rosemary Fyfe, 37, with a lump of wood.

London's bad for the young

MANY London teenagers think the capital is unhealthy, with poor air quality, too much traffic and dirty streets, a survey by health policy think-tank the King's Fund, showed yesterday. Two-thirds of those aged 16 to 19 believe London will be even more unhealthy in five years.

YVONNE ROBERTS

It's a tale of slap and fickle – and it's bound to end in tears

IN THE WEDNESDAY REVIEW PAGE 4

Elderly enlisted by Straw

BY JON SMITH

THE HOME Secretary, Jack Straw, last night said grandmothers could be some of the most effective members of society in his war against the "walk-on-by" culture.

In an interview on the BBC News Online website he urged people not to put themselves at risk by tackling hooligans, but he stressed: "Some of the most effective people at tackling these youngsters are grandmothers because they know how to deal with these lads.

"On the whole, you don't hit your mother, you don't hit women."

Mr Straw also recounted one of his own run-ins with criminals. "If you're faced with someone who is being chased down a turning as I was four years ago and someone shouts, 'Stop him, he's just robbed somebody!', you've got to make a very quick decision.

"I stopped him. I had a vague recollection of how I rugby-tackled 20 years before and it worked. It may not have done. He may have had a knife with him, but there you are."

Art owners told to allow public access

By Fran Abrams
Westminster Correspondent

OWNERS OF artworks who have escaped inheritance tax by promising public access to their homes are to be told they must advertise their opening hours nationally.

After years of complaints that many of the treasures remained locked away from public gaze, officials are to write to more than 700 owners demanding to know how they will ensure people learn about them. The collections include three Rodin sculptures, a Picasso, four Renoirs, twenty Constables and two Goyas. Among the owners who benefit are the Duke of Roxburghe, who recently "donated" a £600,000 portrait of one of his ancestors under the scheme.

The revelation follows a report out today from the National Audit Office, which says just one in six of the works of art receives a visitor each year. Although more than 20,000 sculptures, paintings, drawings and other objects are listed on an Inland Revenue website, the proportion of works visited fell last year from one in five, the report says.

In most cases, the computerised register does not say where the artwork is kept but gives the address of an agent. Seven out of ten owners demand references before disclosing their addresses. Owners have complained that if their addresses are published they will be vulnerable to art thieves.

The audit office found one quarter of visits took more than two months to arrange and most visitors were professional researchers rather than just art lovers. One Inland Revenue agent waited three months for an appointment to see some portraits. An agent acting for the owner denied knowing about the paintings and then demanded a reference before making an appointment.

Since 1984, owners have been able to defer their 40 per cent inheritance tax in return for an undertaking to protect national heritage assets. Under the scheme, they had to make the artworks available to the public by appointment.

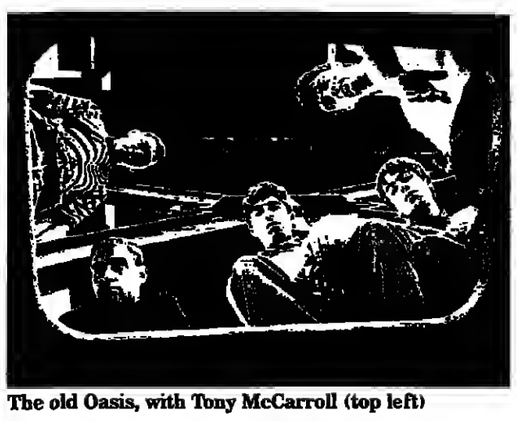
Stricter regulations introduced last year now make it compulsory for owners to advertise regular opening hours. They must do so through their local tourist board, on a notice board outside their home and in either *Hudson's Historic Houses and Gardens* or *Johansens Historic Houses, Castles and Gardens*.

However, the audit office found that of 31 owners who had more than 100 tax-exempt works, 25 had never received a visit. Most owners believed they were supplying enough information about their possessions and some resented the idea that they might be checked. "I have signed an undertaking. That should be sufficient," one owner told the audit office team.

A spokeswoman for the Inland Revenue said a review of all the artworks would take place this year, with owners being asked to explain their plans for regular opening hours and wider advertising. Because owners would be forced to advertise there were plans to phase out the computerised register altogether, she added.

■ One of Britain's finest collections of Dutch Old Masters will be taken from its permanent home in the National Gallery in London for a tour to Southampton and Leeds, using a lottery grant of £89,300 awarded yesterday. The Heritage Lottery Fund announced a further £3.8m of funding for 22 projects in England and Northern Ireland, bringing the total awarded to more than £1.2bn.

Tony McCarroll leaves court yesterday (above) with cash, but only memories of pop glory, like early Beatle Pete Best (below, second from left) *Peter Macdiarmid*



The old Oasis, with Tony McCarroll (top left)

Sacked Oasis drummer in £600,000 deal

By Kate Watson-Smyth

LIFE MAY well imitate art but although Oasis have admitted their musical debt to the Beatles, no one expected them to mirror their lives quite so closely as well.

Just as Pete Best was sacked from the Fab Four in 1962, so the drummer Tony McCarroll waved goodbye to fame and glory in 1995 when he was dismissed from Oasis.

Both men even chose the same lawyer, Jens Hills, when they went to court to claim their share of the royalties. Mr McCarroll was claiming 20 per cent of the band's earnings – a figure put variously at between £10m and £18m.

He appeared in court yesterday for the opening round of what was shaping up as one of the most sensational trials in the pop music.

But Mr McCarroll was again denied his 15 minutes of fame when the case was settled almost immediately.

Jonathan Rayner-James QC told the judge: "I am happy to tell you that the parties have come to terms and that will resolve all matters between the parties."

Far from becoming an instant millionaire, Mr McCarroll had agreed to forgo future royalties and had accepted a lump sum of £600,000 for the songs he had played on.

Nearly three years ago Mr Hills won £2m for Mr Best, the drummer on several tracks of the Beatles' anthology album. Yesterday, to the disappointment of a handful of fans who had queued for an hour to ensure a place in court 17 at the High Court, the brothers Gallagher did not appear.

After the hearing Mr McCarroll said he was glad it was all over. He lost his job four years ago after a personality clash with Noel Gallagher and allegations that he took no interest in improving his "poor" drumming.

As he left court Mr McCarroll said he was totally happy and he was working in rehearsal studios in Manchester teaching drumming to young hopefuls. Asked if he had buried the hatchet with the rest of the band, he said: "No, I don't talk to them any more."

In a rare interview recently, he said he had been sacked in a three-minute phone call from the manager, Marcus Russell, but he blamed Noel.

"At the end of the day it was he who made the decision for me to go. He [Noel] approached the band and said, 'Tony's gone'."

The Beatles' manager, Brian Epstein, had called Pete Best into his office 33 years earlier and told him he was being replaced by Ringo Starr. "The lads want you out," he said.

When Mr McCarroll found out he had been replaced by Alan White, a session musician and the only Londoner in the group, he approached Mr Hills seeking money for being unlawfully expelled from the partnership".

Fugitive, 10, found in US

By Kate Watson-Smyth

A 10-YEAR-OLD boy thought to be Britain's youngest fugitive has been found in America, police said yesterday.

The boy, who cannot be named for legal reasons, had been due to appear in court at Banbury, Oxfordshire, last week, accused of assault, attempted robbery and possession of an offensive weapon.

When he failed to answer the summons, a warrant was issued for his arrest and police began searching for him. He has now been found in Detroit, Michigan, with his father.

A spokesman for Thames Valley Police said: "He has been traced to an address in the United States where he has been, with his father, since before the court appearance."

Inspector Robin Gardner of Banbury police said: "The next step is to work out what action to take. The decision will be made with advice from the Crown Prosecution Service, social services and the court."

Harry Fletcher, the assistant general secretary of the National Association of Probation Officers, said: "It would be best to try to persuade the father that it is in the best interests of the child to return to Britain and face the consequences of what he is alleged to have done."

Woman saw Jews marched to death

A WOMAN who was forced by the Nazis to act as a witness to their atrocities told Britain's first war crimes trial yesterday how she watched hundreds of Jews being marched to their deaths.

Galina Puchkina was aged 12 when the Nazis made her watch as Jews were forced to undress and then herded along the so-called "route of death" in the Nazi-occupied town of Domachevo in Belarus. Later she would hear the sound of machine-gun fire.

Mrs Puchkina, 68, told the Old Bailey she and her sister had been attending a Catholic church in Domachevo on the morning of the Jewish Day of Atonement in 1942. Soldiers grabbed them and took them to a hill overlooking the town's Jewish ghetto, she said.

In front of them they saw hundreds of men, women and children. They could hear quite clearly the sound of them crying and shouting.

Speaking through a Russian interpreter, Mrs Puchkina said: "They were all being taken to their deaths. There were lots of them – about 2,000.

"They were herded away – as we watched them. We were afraid ourselves. After the first group were led away, I heard the sound of machine-gun fire. After the third, the Germans told us to go home. We did. My sister took flight immediately – she was three years younger."

The court has previously been told that 2,900 Jews were murdered that day, before being buried in mass graves in sand hills on the outskirts of the town. When locals visited the site a few days later, the ground was soaked with blood.

Mrs Puchkina was giving evidence during the trial of Anthony Sawoniuk, 77, who is alleged to have assisted the Nazis while working as a police officer in Domachevo during the German occupation of Belarus between 1941 and 1944. He is accused of murdering up to 20 Jews while organising "search and kill" operations on behalf of the Nazis after the massacre in September 1942.

Mr Sawoniuk, a former British Rail ticket collector now living in south London, denies the charges.

Yesterday Mrs Puchkina said Mr Sawoniuk had served with the Nazis' locally recruited police force from the outset. "Judging from how he behaved afterwards, I believe he joined voluntarily," she said.

Another woman from a nearby village said she narrowly escaped death after being mistaken for a Jew by a German and a local policeman whom she knew as Andrusha – the nickname of Mr Sawoniuk.

Fedora Yakimuk, 72, told the court she cut herself accidentally while working in the fields with a sickle. She said her mother had bound the wound with a rag soaked in iodine. "But the iodine came through the rag and there was a yellow mark on my arm," Mrs Yakimuk told the court through a Ukrainian interpreter.

"The Jews would wear yellow arm bands. At the time Andrusha was walking along with a German. They saw me and started shouting 'Jude, Jude' (Jew, Jew) with the intention of making me stop. I stopped and they grabbed me and started dragging me away to be shot.

"I was crying and kissing their feet, explaining, 'I am not a Jew.' He knew me very well, but did not protect me. Andrusha did not protect me. I was on my knees, kissing the German's feet.

"When he realised, the German pulled off the bandage and saw what it was and let me go.

"It was about a week after the massacre of the Jews."

The trial continues.

Galina Puchkina: 'They were herded away'

Triumphant Bainbridge enunciates her mind

THE NOVELIST Beryl Bainbridge won a major literary prize yesterday and followed it with musings that are unlikely to be beaten for political incorrectness in the whole of the prize-giving season.

First, she called for elocution lessons to be made compulsory in schools. In case that was not politically incorrect enough, Ms Bainbridge then guaranteed the wrath of her home city.

Although she is one of Liverpool's most famous daughters, the 64-year-old writer and former actress urged that all young people from the city endeavour to lose the Liverpool accent, which she described as "nasal" and "stupid".

Exuberant at winning the £10,000 WH Smith Literary Award for her novel *Master Georgie* after missing out on the Booker and Whitbread prizes, Ms Bainbridge nevertheless played down both the value of book prizes and the love of reading in Britain.

Receiving her prize from the Arts minister Alan Howarth, who is promoting the Government's "Year of Reading", she said that she did not believe that the percentage of the population now reading novels was much greater than it was in Dickens' time.

"Sometimes I wonder whether I'm being given prizes at my age out of sympathy or pity ... I'm rather fortunate that all these things that are happening to me in the last two or three years are happening late enough for me not to take them too seriously," she said

Speaking later, she explained why she did not take book prizes too seriously, and did so with a reasoning unlikely to be endorsed by Mr Howarth, her home city or the nation's largest bookseller, which was giving the prize.

She said: "I'm not sure that prizes have a great deal of effect on the majority of people, but then the majority of people are uneducated.

"When I grew up in Liverpool in the Forties, I was in the Young Communists League at the age of 12, and it was people who were interested in politics who encouraged me to read.

"What would help England now would be to have elocution lessons in all schools. I had elocution lessons from the age of 11. I went with Jean Alexander (who played Hilda Ogden in *Coronation Street*) and they help you, not just to speak, but to enjoy language and reading. The uneducated now cannot spin out a sentence. You cannot have an education system that works for the majority if you publish a newspaper like *The Sun*."

As part of her drive for elocution for all, she advocated that Liverpudlians should lose their accent. "It's not a dialect," she said, "it's nasal, and that's what they should get rid of. My father didn't have that stupid Liverpool accent.

"Have you ever listened to them on *Brookside*? They don't speak the English language."

Mr Howarth said that he had been delighted to present Ms Bainbridge with her cheque and noted that it had been an excellent lunch.

Beryl Bainbridge with her prize-winning novel: 'What would help England now would be to have elocution lessons in schools' *Tom Craig*

Police warn of illegal cloning

BY JASON BENNETTO
Crime Correspondent

AN ILLEGAL trade in cloned body parts and genetically engineered children has been identified by an élite British police squad as a future market for organised crime.

The head of a new research unit at the National Criminal Intelligence Service (NCIS) also issued a warning yesterday about money laundering and illegal gambling on the Internet as well as a potential new addiction to "virtual reality drugs".

Crime groups are already becoming involved in the international sale of transplant organs, such as kidneys, said Robert Hall, the head of analysis at NCIS. "Genetic commerce also has a very lucrative potential not only for the scientists but also the unscrupulous practitioner or criminal who wishes to make easy money. At its simplest, there is the organised criminal who sells illegally acquired, genetically engineered body parts.

"At the more complex, there is the bogus agent offering gene therapy to the unwary or desperate parent, or even customising genetic changes into a newly conceived child."

Speaking yesterday at a conference on international crime held in London, Mr Hall described some of the developments that could be illegally traded in the future. "By 2020, 95 per cent of human body parts could be replaceable by laboratory-grown organs. Cloning will enable parents to select and improve the character and health of their children."

The NCIS is also investigating organised crime's role in environmental issues, such as dumping toxic waste, and the trade in endangered species.

"There is evidence that toxic dumping is very prevalent in the United States. We know it happens here, but we do not yet know the extent of the problem," Mr Hall said.

Commons debates the deadly danger of asteroids

MEMBERS OF Parliament will have an opportunity today to discuss the end of the world as we know it, when they debate the prospect of the Earth being hit by an asteroid.

Lembit Opik, the Liberal Democrat MP for Montgomeryshire, has been granted parliamentary time for a debate on the threat posed to civilisation by the future impact of a chunk of wandering space rock.

BY STEVE CONNOR
Science Editor

Professor Mark Bailey, the director of the Armagh Observatory in Northern Ireland, is supporting Mr Opik in trying to raise the Government's awareness of an event that could ruin global agriculture by releasing millions of tons of dust into the atmosphere and blotting out the Sun. "Major cosmic impacts don't occur very often, but when they do they have the potential to kill billions of people," Professor Bailey said.

"An object one kilometre in diameter is generally accepted to be big enough to cause global devastation. No matter where they hit, they'll have a global effect," Professor Bailey said.

It is believed that a giant asteroid smashed into the Gulf of Mexico 65 million years ago and killed off the dinosaurs. A much smaller object destroyed hundreds of square miles of forest when it exploded over Siberia nearly 100 years ago.

Estimates of the number of asteroids bigger than one kilometre across have increased in the past 10 years through learning more about the orbits of near-Earth objects, he said.

Astronomers calculate there are at least 2,000 such objects that at some time will pass across the Earth's orbital path around the Sun, making it likely that at least one of them will strike the planet every 100,000 years.

Jonathan Tate, director of Spaceguard UK, an organisation dedicated to raising awareness about asteroid collisions, said the chances of being killed by an asteroid impact is twice as high as dying in an aircraft crash. "The whole subject suffers from a substantial giggle factor. However, it's now technically possible to avoid, or at least mitigate the effects of impacts," he said.

The most threatening objects arise from the main asteroid belt of the Solar System, between Mars and Jupiter, and their movements can be tracked from Earth using military satellites, Professor Bailey said. "Asteroid collisions can be predicted and can be potentially averted. A nuclear explosion just off the surface of the object is possibly the way it could be done," he said.

Last year scientists warned that a large asteroid could pass relatively close to Earth in 2028. Travelling at 17,000mph, the asteroid would release the same energy as several nuclear bombs if it hit the Earth.

Soundbites and slogans join great quotes of the age

BY DAVID LISTER
Arts News Editor

THE SOUNDBITE has been acknowledged as equally important in the history of the 20th century as the seminal political speech or the utterances of the greatest scientists and inventors.

The paperback edition of the *Oxford Dictionary of 20th Century Quotations* is published at the end of the year, and the compilers have "Gone to work on an egg", setting up a generous section on advertising slogans bound to irritate novelists, and parents already driven to distraction by children mimicking TV catchphrases.

Alas, Salman Rushdie's "Naughty but Nice" from his brief sojourn as a copywriter fails to make the Oxford. He has to be satisfied with the less catchy quote from his post-advertising days: "One of the things a writer is for is to say the unsayable, speak the unspeakable and ask difficult questions."

Elizabeth Knowles, the *Dictionary* editor, says: "It is possible to see different forms of source becoming dominant. In the first half of the century the major sources of quotation came from the written word in poetry, plays and novels, or the spoken word through the medium of major speeches on formal occasions. Latterly, the possible canon has widened to include what might be thought more ephemeral material – soundbites, online sources, films, television and advertisements."

Ms Knowles points out that through what seem ephemeral soundbites we can trace changes in manners and social mores, and track the "sound of the 20th century". She says: "'Evening all' is Sergeant Dixon's opening to *Dixon of Dock Green*, first spoken in 1956; a contrast to the 1990s aggression of 'I'm Bart Simpson: who the hell are you?'"

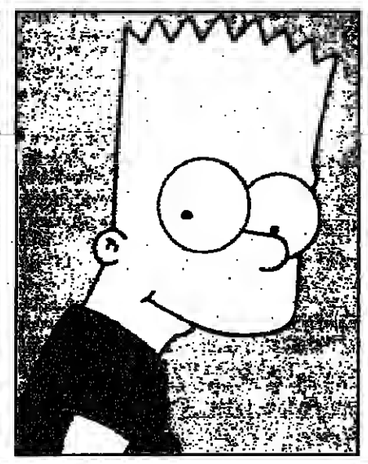
One of the most interesting sections deals with misquotations of the century. Ms Knowles says: "One of the features of popular culture is that quoted material is often modified by the quoter." So, if you thought someone really did say "Beam me up, Scotty" or "Crisis, what crisis?" or "The white heat of technology" or "Play it again, Sam" or "Me Tarzan, you Jane" you would be wrong. They were: "Beam us up, Mr Scott", and "Crisis, what crisis?" was a *Sun* headline, not a piece of prime ministerial rhetoric by James Callaghan. And even that might have been borrowed from a Supertramp album title. Harold Wilson actually talked about "The white heat of this revolution' and Humphrey Bogart said, simply: "Play it, Sam". And the immortal "Me Tarzan, you Jane" was neither in movies nor the books. The Tarzan film star Johnny Weissmuller said it in a magazine interview as a throwaway line.

Leading article, Review, page 3

"Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few"
Winston Churchill on the Battle of Britain, House of Commons, 1940

"That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind"
Neil Armstrong, 1969

"You cannot be serious"
John McEnroe to a Wimbledon umpire, 1981



"Eat my shorts"
Bart Simpson, 1990 and onwards

"Go to work on an egg"
British Egg Marketing Board, 1957

Smoking rising for first time since 1972

BY NIGEL COPE AND JEREMY LAURANCE

BRITAIN'S BIGGEST cigarette manufacturer yesterday claimed that adult smoking was on the increase for the first time in a generation, fuelled by a flood of cheap, bootlegged imports.

Gallaher, which produces the Benson & Hedges and Silk Cut brands, said the proportion of British adults who smoke cigarettes rose from 22.3 per cent to 23.2 per cent last year. The rise equales to half a million more adult smokers.

The company says the high levels of duty imposed on tobacco in the UK meant a typical packet of 20 cigarettes costs £3.60 compared with £2.60 on the black market. The Government is committed to above-inflation rises in tobacco duty each year to help curb smoking. Gallaher said it had given its findings to the Government ahead of next week's Budget: "Our message to the Government, is that if you are doing this to reduce smoking, it's not working."

Gallaher denied that cutting duty levels would also lead to a rise in smoking. "It is better to have control of the market... so we can stop the selling of cigarettes to children." a spokesman claimed.

But pressure groups blamed the rise in smoking on promotion by the tobacco companies. A spokeswoman for the anti-smoking pressure group Ash said: "The companies have been targeting students by concentrating their marketing around nightclubs and handing out free cigarettes at promotional events. We know there has been a rise in smoking among teenagers and those in their early twenties but it is not bootlegging that is responsible."

If the rise claimed by Gallaher is confirmed it will be the reversal of a downward trend. Smoking has been declining steadily at about 1 per cent a year since 1972 when half the population were regular smokers. Latest figures for 1997 show 28 per cent of women and 29 per cent of men smoke.

A survey by Mintel last year gave the first sign that the 25-year fall in smoking had stopped. It suggested the overall number of smokers had risen slightly. New official figures will not be published until later this year. There was a blip in the figures in 1996, the most recently published data. According to the government's General Household Survey that year the proportion of adults smoking rose from 28 per cent to 29 per cent between 1994-96.

Gordon Brown, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, is likely to increase taxes on cigarettes in his Budget next week despite Treasury concern about an alarming rise in tobacco smuggling, ministers hinted yesterday. During question time in the Commons, Tessa Jowell, the Public Health minister, gave a clear signal that taxes would be increased.

Mr Brown is expected to announce an investigation into the operation of Customs and Excise after officials said he was losing more than £1bn in duty a year through organised smuggling.

Dundee gives African tribe wet response

BY STEPHEN GOODWIN
Scotland Correspondent

WHAT'S IN a name? Take Dundee. A tribal chief from Cameroon was so struck by the similarity between the internal alliterative qualities of the name and that of his own village, he wanted them twinned.

To Chief Gaston Kamsung – who consulted an atlas for a suitable partner – the Scottish town sounded pretty much like Ndounde. Ndounde has a population of 2,000 – mainly subsistence farmers, while Dundee, the erstwhile capital of jute and jam, has 150,000 residents. But it was the sound of the name that was important.

Alas, Dundee is already twinned with five cities so council leaders "politely declined" the request. But tonight local businesses are supporting a charity auction to raise £20,000 to provide Ndounde with a fresh water supply. "I know the people of Cameroon are grateful for the support we've offered," said the Lord Provost, Mervyn Rolfe. "All we've asked is they send us a couple of decent footballers."

MILES KINGTON

'Formulaic' is a word much used by lazy TV executives

IN THE WEDNESDAY REVIEW PAGE 2

Spasms and salivating on back benches as pagers go off

THE SKETCH

THOMAS SUTCLIFFE

WHEN A mobile phone goes off on the Labour benches the result is usually a highly localised twitch from a single MP. Viewed from a distance it looks rather like that focused shudder that a horse's flank will give when trying to shake off an annoying fly.

But when the bleep of the official Labour Party pager sounds, as it did yesterday afternoon, the effect is dramatically different. The whole backbench rump flinches as one. It reminds you of those experiments in which an amputated frog's leg is given a quick jolt of electricity and jerks in a posthumous simulation of independent life. The mechanism isn't directly galvanic, of course; instead, the effect is brought about by a trained Pavlovian response – the bleeper sounds and loyal MPs find themselves salivating at the thought of advancement.

It wasn't the only reflex response to be seen yesterday – indeed, it depressingly highlighted just what a creature of instinct Parliament can be. There's the Waiting-List Twitch, for example, a familiar spasm during health questions. Under Ann Widdecombe the Tories have recently made an admirable attempt to bring this under control – or at least to argue that waiting-list figures are a pretty specious measure of success in the delivery of healthcare. But Ann Widdecombe was absent and though Alan Duncan tried to hold the line, questioning Frank Dobson about the distortions and absurdities involved in fetishising this statistic, he couldn't suppress the hind-brain urge to denounce the Government for falsifying its claims – an implicit assertion that such figures do matter after all.

On the other side, Labour ministers, however lightly touched on this sensitive spot, still flail out with the same unthinking energy. "We'll take no lectures from the party opposite ..." begins a frontbench spokesman automatically.

Then there's Foreign and Commonwealth Palsy, a rarer condition but no less startling for that. The stimulus in this case is often some foreign atrocity involving British nationals. Yesterday, for example, the Foreign Secretary turned up to give the House a statement on the kidnappings on the Ugandan border, an abduction that ended in the death of several British tourists. Never mind that he didn't know very much yet, never mind that Michael Howard's questions were knowingly fired into a vacuum, something had to be done, even if the something was nothing. Mr Cook looked grave, offered condolences, washed his hands of whatever had happened. Our High Commissioner had made clear to the Ugandan Foreign Minister that "there should be no intervention which might put lives at risk". I hesitate to think what Robin Cook might say if the Ugandan High Commissioner tried to direct a security operation taking place in this country, but never mind the impertinence either, HMG was in the clear.

Amid this fiesta of spasms and jerks it is easy for healthy and useful reflexes to go undetected. When Tam Dalyell stands up during points of order to raise, yet again, the nature of our military operations in Iraq, you can almost hear a collective sigh of condescension in the chamber. There goes mad Tam again, the thought runs – quite incapable of controlling himself, poor chap. All he has to do is glance at a press report about renewed bombing and his muscles propel him upright. Best to look away. But Mr Dalyell is right to twitch – the Foreign Secretary, it seems, can find the time to address the House about the fate of four British tourists, a matter with no foreign-policy implications, but he cannot squeeze in a statement about an escalating military action against another country. Mr Dalyell's colleagues, so sensitive and responsive to other stimuli, display a paralysis on this matter and it is not to their, or Parliament's, credit.

Cook fights off attack over arms to Africa

SIERRA LEONE
BY SARAH SCHAEFER
Political Reporter

ROBIN COOK was under renewed attack in the Commons last night over his conduct in the arms-to-Sierra Leone affair.

The Foreign Secretary – who sought to deflect criticism by announcing an extra £10m in aid for the war-torn region – was accused of failing to answer a number of "serious charges" against his department and in particular those against one of his ministers, Tony Lloyd.

The aid package, to be paid from the Foreign Office's own reserve, will boost the Nigerian-led Ecomog force, which is trying to restore President Kabbah to full power.

But during a Tory-led debate, Michael Howard, the shadow foreign secretary, said that the inquiry reports of Sir Thomas Legg and the Foreign Affairs Select Committee had both blamed ministers for "deliberately mis-stating the scope and the nature of the arms embargo to Sierra Leone".

He went on: "This was especially serious as the Government made an Order in Council implementing the embargo, which created a criminal offence with a maximum penalty of seven years' imprisonment."

Any role the Foreign Secretary played in the leaking of the hard-hitting Foreign Affairs Select Committee's report by the Labour MP Ernie Ross (Dundee W) is already being investigated by the Commons Standards and Privileges Committee. The report dealt with the breach of an arms embargo by Sandline, a British firm.

Tony Lloyd: Main target of criticism from Tories

But Mr Cook, who was forced to delay a trip to Russia because of the debate, said the real issue was the continuing suffering of the people of Sierra Leone.

"Sandline's role has been absolutely irrelevant to the military activities on the ground and absolutely irrelevant to most of the people of Sierra Leone," he insisted.

Mr Cook said Britain had done more than any other Western power to help the people of Sierra Leone through diplomatic support and aid and the extra £10m would provide further support for Ecomog, help to train a "democratically accountable" military force, encourage the rebels to give up their weapons and promote demilitarisation.

Launching his defence, Mr Cook stressed he would accept any recommendations of the select committee's report and would announce any changes to arms embargoes to Parliament.

"I agree that all officials should be doubly careful in contacts with persons under criminal investigation and I have instructed them to consult first with our legal advisers.

"I agree with them on the need for action against arms brokering, and the Government is currently considering the responses to its proposals on its recent White Paper on the subject.

"I believe that the committee is right to be concerned about the particular sensitivities in dealing with military companies whose staff include former members of the armed forces or intelligence agencies.

"And I share their view that Colonel Spicer (chief of Sandline) should have known more about the legal position of the supply of arms and was less than frank with Foreign Office officials about the supply of arms."

The committee's report had found that there had been an "appalling" failure by the Foreign Office in its handling of the affair.

But Mr Cook told MPs: "Their report does not raise the slightest doubt about the central findings of Legg inquiry – that there was no connivance in the Foreign Office of a breach of the arms embargo and there was no conspiracy by either officials or ministers to undermine the publicly stated policy."

Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, in the House of Commons yesterday following the murder of tourists in Uganda; Mr Cook also came under renewed attack last night over his conduct in the arms-to-Sierra Leone affair PA

Silent MPs listen to Uganda statement

FOREIGN AFFAIRS
BY COLIN BROWN
Chief Political Correspondent

THE COMMONS listened in shocked silence to an emergency statement by the Foreign Secretary in which he announced that four Britons had been killed after being taken hostage in Uganda.

Robin Cook said last night that he was seeking an explanation about the deaths of the four British tourists after assurances by the Ugandan Foreign Affairs Minister 24 hours earlier that no military action would be taken that might put lives at risk.

"We are seeking urgent clarification from the Ugandan authorities of the circumstances in which these deaths took place," Mr Cook said. "It is not yet clear whether the Ugandan military intervened directly, but if that is confirmed we will want an immediate explanation."

Mr Cook said the Foreign Office travel advice for Uganda was updated on 19 February. It warned: "Rebels are periodically active in Uganda/Rwanda/Congo border areas around the Kisoro district. Although the situation is currently peaceful, it can change quickly."

That advice was changed yesterday to warn all against all travel to the border areas, Mr Cook said. But he agreed with Menzies Campbell, the Liberal Democrat Foreign Affairs spokesman, that travel companies had a responsibility to warn tourists away from dangerous areas.

Mr Cook said: "It is important that travel companies do not treat the advice from the Foreign Office as some sort of indemnity. They should provide frank and clear warnings to those who travel with them."

Hospital waiting lists 'fiddled'

HEALTH
BY SARAH SCHAEFER
Political Reporter

THE CONSERVATIVES accused Frank Dobson of a "massive fiddle" over the calculation of hospital waiting lists yesterday after he announced that they fell by 14,200 in January.

Alan Duncan, the Tory health spokesman, claimed the "real" waiting lists stood more than 500,000 higher because the number of patients waiting to get on the waiting lists had almost doubled.

"These fiddled figures will fool no one. All Labour has done is shifted the bulge from waiting to an official list to waiting to get on it," he said during question time.

Earlier, the Secretary of State for Health insisted the drop was a "massive achievement" for the health service, after waiting lists rose by 11,500 in December.

The number of people waiting for treatment was 1,159,368 – the lowest figure for almost two years. The Government is now only 1,400 short of its pledge to cut waiting lists to their pre-election levels by next month, he said.

The number of people waiting more than 12 months for treatment also fell by 600 to 54,643 – the eighth consecutive reduction.

THE HOUSE

Pension Bill 'rushed through'

THE GOVERNMENT was accused by the Tories yesterday of showing a "total lack of respect" for Parliament and the voters by rushing through its pensions reforms without full public consultation. Ministers decided to start the committee stage of the Welfare Reform and Pensions Bill before charities and others had offered their views.

Today in the House

Commons: EMU and UK economic convergence, British film industry. At 2.30pm, Prime Minister's questions.
Lords: Scottish Parliament (Disqualification) Order. National Assembly for Wales (Disqualification) Order.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Nurses respond to appeal

IN ALL, 41,398 nurses have responded to the Government's campaign to alleviate the recruitment crisis in the NHS, said Frank Dobson, Secretary of State for Health.

Silent MPs listen to Uganda statement

FOREIGN AFFAIRS
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More grey days ahead forecast by both Erreuno (left) and Roberto Cavalli at Milan yesterday

Muddy colours dominate the Milan catwalk

By Susannah Frankel in Milan

THE MIGHTY MaxMara showed both its mainline collection and the younger Sportmax line in Milan yesterday. Both labels are much loved in Italy – the company is the only one to rival Armani in profits year after year.

The formula for MaxMara mainline is simple. Take the trends turned out by more directional labels – namely Gucci and/or Prada – and turn them down for wider public consumption. It works season after season – beautifully made clothes that won't frighten the less fashion-literate customer.

Some cause for concern for any consumer, however, might be that the palettes for the next millennium look likely to be decidedly muddy. Sunday's Prada show featured acres of sludgy hues. MaxMara travelled a similar route, with shades of caramel, honey and sage. There were plenty of coats, of course. The label is famous for them: long, narrow and in softest cashmere or more sporty, knee-length and with big, soft hoods.

The hippie-chic look was still in evidence, if more subdued. Sweaters and skirts in mohair and suede were pure Annie Hall in flavour – for evening they came appliqued with tarnished silver and gold.

The Sportmax show as usual offered a less classic look than its big sister, but colours were similarly downbeat. The ubiquitous fleece made an appearance. More worrying was the return of the rugby shirt, worn over sloppy pants and full skirts – a little touch of the great British youth club has arrived in Milan, it seems.

MaxMara's car coat and matching skirt *Luca Bruno*

Labelling fails to identify GM foods

By Charles Arthur
Technology Editor

THREE-QUARTERS of common foodstuffs sampled in supermarkets could contain ingredients made from genetically modified (GM) soya or maize, but do not say so on their labels, according to new research.

A poll of 2,000 people by the Consumers' Association released yesterday found that 90 per cent of people had heard of GM food, of which 94 per cent wanted such ingredients clearly indicated, and 92 per cent wanted labelling extended to include processed derivatives of GM ingredients. Helen Parker, editor of *Which?*, the association's magazine, called on the Government to clear up the "confusing" labelling for such foods, principally soya and maize sourced from the United States.

The research came as Tony Blair repeated his defence of GM foods. The Prime Minister said in a Commons written reply: "All GM food produced in the UK has been approved by independent expert scientific advisers." But the claim rang hollow because no GM foods are actually produced in the UK. While products such as tomato purée made from GM tomatoes have been on sale in British supermarkets since 1986, it is made from tomatoes grown in North America.

In the new survey, *Which?* investigated 32 foods, including supermarkets' own brands from Asda, Safeway, Sainsbury and Tesco. None had labels declaring whether they did or did not contain GM ingredients, but only eight of the sample, including Kellogg's Cornflakes and Heinz Rice Pudding for children, could be confirmed as coming from a non-GM source.

The remaining 24 were claimed by the makers to be exempt from labelling, on the basis that the GM element could be an additive, used as a processing aid, or was removed in processing. "There are so many loopholes and exemptions that, even if the current labelling laws were fully enforced, consumers would still be left in the dark," said Ms Parker.

Although European Union laws insist GM foods should be clearly labelled, that is not possible where GM products are grown and harvested in the US, and mixed with non-GM product before shipping. Soya-derived ingredients such as lecithin – used in chocolate – and other GM ingredients that contain no protein or DNA do not have to be labelled.

The Food and Drink Federation, representing the UK food industry, said: "Blanket GM labelling of every ingredient derived from soya and maize would not be meaningful or useful."

■ Michael Meacher, the Environment minister, has ordered a review of new data suggesting that bees or the wind could carry pollen from trials of GM crops to fertilise standard varieties.

But members of the Advisory Committee on Releases to the Environment (Acre), which advises the Government on GM crop trials, yesterday rejected as absurd data released by the Soil Association, which represents organic farmers. The data suggests that pollen from GM maize can spread further than the 200-metre boundary around the plants, and that almost 1 in 100 maize kernels would be pollinated by foreign pollen.

Irvine's postage invites criticism

By Paul Waugh
Political Correspondent

TO A MAN who spent £650,000 of public money on wallpapering his lavatory, the sum of £9.80 must seem like a piddling amount.

However, the admission by Lord Irvine of Lairg, the Lord Chancellor, yesterday that he had used his office to send out invitations for a private party at the Garrick Club has created a political stink that would defy Domestos.

In a move guaranteed to send Jeremy Paxman's raised eyebrows into orbit, Lord Irvine posted letters at public cost to persuade Garrick members to allow one of his friends to rejoin the esteemed London club.

If only Mr Paxman, who was blackballed by the club when he applied, had the social connections of Andrew Patrick, the managing director of the Fine Art Society and pal of the Lord Chancellor. In a letter that suggests New Labour's "old boys' network" is as effective as that of the Tories, Lord Irvine pleaded with fellow members to attend a party to support the membership application of Mr Patrick.

When the use of public funds was revealed yesterday, the Tories expressed outrage, claiming that the incident was yet further evidence of the Lord Chancellor's arrogant approach to his role.

A spokesman for the chastened cabinet minister said: "It was a simple oversight. The Lord Chancellor will be reimbursing the cost of the postage. The cost is £9.80."

THE INDEPENDENT
Wednesday 3 March 1999

School's bar on ill pupils 'unfair'

BY JUDITH JUDD
Education Editor

PARENTS ARE complaining that an oversubscribed secondary school is being unfair, selecting its pupils according to the number of days they have been absent from primary school.

Two parents have told the Campaign for State Education, the parents' pressure group, that their children were denied places at the Lincoln School of Science and Technology in Lincoln because of illness. One had a sibling at the school.

The school says its policy of picking pupils according to the number of days they have played truant and/or been absent from school in the last full year before they transfer to secondary school is objective, fair and on government guidelines.

But Margaret Tulloch of the Campaign for State Education said: "There may be all sorts of reasons why children are away from school. They may be ill, or school phobics who have overcome their phobia who will be rewarded by being disadvantaged.

"Even if they have a poor attendance record through truancy at primary schools, it is unfair to label them throughout their school career or to deny them places at a secondary."

The 1,200-pupil school became a specialist college seven years ago and is allowed to decide its admissions policy and select some of its pupils by "aptitude", because it opted out of local authority control.

Steve Davies, the deputy head, said there had been 300 applications this year for a school expected to take 180.

He said there had been "endless" meetings about the best way to admit pupils and he believed the system was fair and objective. "We were simply not going to go down the road of testing them for aptitude or selecting them by ability. We want to take a full range of ability. We are opposed to selective education."

Each primary school in Lincoln is allowed to send two pupils per class to the school. He said the school had never intended to be a local comprehensive for local children. It had attracted business sponsorship so that it could become a specialist college and the sponsors had insisted it should take children from a wide area.

David Cordingley, head of one of the feeder primaries for the school and secretary of the local branch of the National Union of Teachers, said he believed that admissions should be determined co-operatively by all the schools in an area.

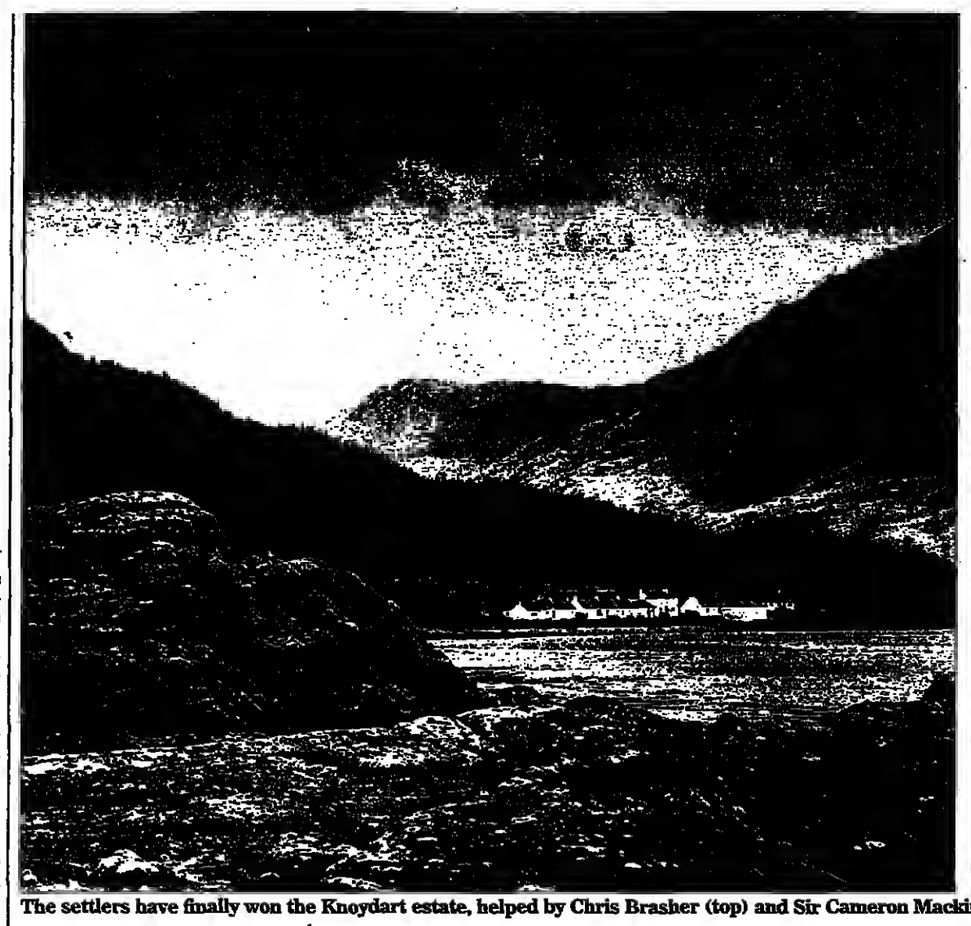
"I am greatly concerned about the child with some kind of chronic illness or disability being penalised," he said.

He said when he had approached the school about a boy who had been absent because of sporting injuries, it had been most helpful and the boy he had been given a place.

The Department for Education said the school was entitled to decide its own policy because it was grant maintained. A spokeswoman said the department could not comment further without more details.

Under a new code of practice at present before Parliament, schools must ensure their admissions arrangements are objective, fair and published.

Schools will then be required to consult on admissions arrangements every year, and other admissions authorities – for example, other schools and the local authority – can refer complaints to a local adjudicator.



The settlers have finally won the Knoydart estate, helped by Chris Brasher (top) and Sir Cameron Mackintosh *Main picture: Tom Pilston*

Mystery gift to Knoydart fund puts estate in settlers' hands

BY STEPHEN GOODWIN
Scotland Correspondent

THE SETTLERS of the Knoydart peninsula have at last taken control of their wild Highland home, thanks to their own dogged resolve and an exotic alliance of a former Olympic athlete, a West End impresario and a mystery benefactor who chipped in £100,000 at the last gasp.

A community-led buyout of the 7,200-acre Knoydart estate was confirmed yesterday, bringing to an end decades of tension between residents and mainly absentee lairds.

The Knoydart Foundation, representing the 70 residents and wild land charities, clinched the £750,000 deal after five months of negotiations with receivers trying to recoup debts of £1.4m left by the last private owners – a company controlled by the discredited English businessman Stephen Hinchliffe.

Bernie Evemy, the former Kent plumber who chairs the community association, was jubilant. "We in Knoydart have created for ourselves a new chieftain, neither man nor woman," he said. "The body of that chieftain is the people. The people of Knoydart are free from the threat of injustice, which was once so brutally inflicted by its owners during the Clearances of 1853 and at the time of the Land Raiders in 1948."

History weighs heavy on Knoydart, a mountainous finger of land between the lochs of Nevis (Heaven) and Hourn (Hell) in north-west Scotland. Inverie, where most of the people live, can be reached only by boat from Mallaig or a two-day trek over the aptly named Rough Bounds.

Except for a handful of children, all the people on Knoydart are incomers, making a living from tourists or the seashore. The families of the Land Raiders – the Seven Men of Knoydart taken to court by the Nazi sympathiser Lord Brocket, who was then their laird, after they claimed a few acres of homeland on return from war service – have long departed.

Yesterday was hailed as the completion of the Raiders' unfinished business. Charlie King, chairman of the foundation, said: "It has taken a long time but we have finally concluded the work started by these pioneers in 1948."

The purchase money has come from varied sources: £250,000 from the John Muir Trust, dedicated to preserving wild land and its fragile communities; £200,000 from the trust set up by the former Olympic athlete Chris Brasher with similar aims; £75,000 from Sir Cameron Mackintosh, promotor of *Les Misérables* and *Martin Guerre*; and £125,000 from public agencies. The balance has come from a public appeal, including a late anonymous donation of £100,000, which Mr Brasher said was the "vital factor" in concluding the deal.

Knoydart has become a symbol of the need for land reform in Scotland and legislation is promised early in the new Scottish Parliament. Mr Brasher appealed to ministers to make sure there was money available for communities just as deserving but less well known.

Sir Cameron's continued involvement in the buyout was something of a surprise. Six weeks ago he was about to buy the estate and lease it back to residents for £1 a year plus a bottle of malt whisky. But the deal foundered over his refusal to grant a "right to buy" at a future date. Sir Cameron owns the adjoining North Morar estate and the settlers preferred "a good neighbour to a laird".

The foundation stressed the purchase was just the first round in the battle to save the estate and appealed for £300,000 for much-needed investment. Unlike other buyouts in the Highlands, Knoydart is not a crofting community but a run-down Victorian sporting estate and reformers and lairds alike will be keeping a close eye on the foundation's stewardship.

Shyness hinders cancer testing

BY JEREMY LAURANCE
Health Editor

EMBARRASSMENT COULD cause a new cancer screening service to fail before it has started, medical experts warned yesterday.

People's distaste for discussing their intimate bodily functions is the biggest barrier to the success of Europe's first bowel screening programme, according to the director-general of the Cancer Research Campaign, Professor Gordon McVie.

The screening programme, which was announced by the Health minister Tessa Jowell yesterday, is the first to target men and women and will be piloted in Coventry and Warwickshire in England and in Tayside, Grampian and Fife in Scotland. Home testing kits will be sent to all residents in the pilot areas aged between 50 and 69 in the £5m study.

They will be asked to send faecal samples for laboratory testing for the presence of "occult" (hidden) blood.

Those who test positively will be invited for further investigation, such as a colonoscopy – internal examination of the colon.

The aim of the tests is the early detection of colorectal (bowel) cancer, of which there are some 30,000 cases a year.

Mrs Jowell said: "About 20,000 people per year die from colorectal cancer and many of them could have been saved if their cancer had been found earlier.

"Many people suffer in silence, too embarrassed to tell their partners or even their doctors. But, if it is caught early, this is one of the most curable of all cancers."

Professor McVie said: "We welcome this pioneering initiative ... but we worry that it could fail if the people who are invited to participate are too embarrassed to send in their samples. For too long the British public has been quite literally dying of embarrassment. We urge to back the screening project and help put an end to this needless waste of life."

Kosovo army 'coup' brings hope of peace

BY EMMA DALY
in Pristina

THE YOUNG men who run Kosovo's guerrilla army have deposed the movement's revolutionary elder statesman, a move that appears to ensure the Albanian delegation will sign the peace deal brokered at talks in Rambouillet last month.

Adem Demaci, the radical who served 28 years in Serbian prisons for his separatist ideals, issued a passionate denunciation of the deal, declaring that it "will not liberate Kosovo from Serbian slavery". Despite his protests, the new generation has decided the Rambouillet deal offers the best hope for eventual independence.

Hashim Thaci, known as Commander Snake, is lined up to become prime minister in a provisional Kosovar Albanian government that will rule until elections are held nine months after the deal is signed.

Power, both political and military, now stems from the general headquarters of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), run by Suleiman Selimi, known as Sultan, Mr Thaci and two others, all of them friends from student days in Pristina. The Democratic League of Kosovo, once the political face of Albanian separatism, and the new Liberal Democratic Party, will share ministries with the KLA but are clearly the junior partners now.

According to Dukagjin Gorani, an Albanian journalist attached to the peace delegation in Rambouillet, Mr Thaci (who was sentenced *in absentia* to 22 years' jail for terrorist offences by the Yugoslav courts) is the pragmatist who forged consensus among his comrades and who won concessions from the West by holding out beyond the first deadline.

"Thaci was basically playing on brinkmanship. I'm not sure of his talent for politics, but he certainly did extract as much as possible," he said. And although the ethnic Albanians were severely criticised for not signing at once and demanding a two-week period for consultations, Mr Thaci had good reasons for demanding a delay.

"What Thaci was in fact fearing in Rambouillet was that any hasty move might have inspired bloodshed among Albanians in Kosovo," Mr Gorani said. This was echoed by Commander Drini, who commands the rebels south of Pristina. "The best [achievement] of the Albanian delegation was that they went into Rambouillet separated and they came out united," he said last week.

Despite their image as hotheads, the young KLA commanders – the four top men are 30 or under – appear to adopt a more moderate line than some of their older supporters in politics or business abroad. They are all university graduates who feel a burden of care for their people.

"They carry their responsibilities quite heavily," said one Western official. "It's as closely knit a force as you would expect. They regret every death."

That afternoon we had watched a KLA fighter lay down his rifle so he could carry his terrified, elderly mother, who is paralysed, to a United Nations car for evacuation from her village after a Yugoslav army attack. As the Western official said, the KLA "was a grassroots development from a peasant army".

This cohesion might have been severely tested by the Rambouillet deal, but the consultation process of the past few days has apparently brought most of the doubters aboard.

"There's a growing momentum for peace," said Veton Surroi, publisher of *Koha Ditore* newspaper and an independent member of the delegation. "I think the majority vote has been positive."

Meanwhile the Secretary of State for Defence, George Robertson, yesterday warned the Yugoslav President, Slobodan Milosevic, that if Serb forces crossed en masse into Kosovo Nato would strike.

Mr Robertson, flying into neighbouring Macedonia to see British troops on standby there, conceded that a ceasefire in the Serbian province was "creaking at the edges" but said full-scale violence had not erupted.

Two war-weary Albanian fighters walking through the village of Petrovo, held by the Kosovo Liberation Army

Police negotiate end to hijack

BY JOHN LICHFIELD
in Paris

POLICE NEGOTIATED the surrender of an Italian hijacker last night who had held hostage six crew members and five passengers aboard an Air France Airbus A320 at Charles de Gaulle airport, Paris.

The man, who claimed to have planted a bomb on board, forced the diversion of the internal flight from Marseilles, which was due to land at the other Paris airport, Orly. He immediately released most of the 66 passengers but held the crew and five people sitting in the first row of seats for another three hours.

His precise motives were unclear but he told the French news agency in a call from a portable telephone that his name was Stefano Savorani and that he represented an organisation called Vitalunismo, which was campaigning for a united Europe. He said he wanted to make a statement on television and asked for cameras to be provided.

He did not want cash, he said, only that his movement, which he also described as a new religion called *l'avenismo*, should be "recognised".

The passenger who lent the mobile phone to the hijacker – just before being released – said that was all was calm aboard the plane and there had been no violence.

It was unclear whether there was really a bomb on the plane, due to land in Paris at 4pm, or whether the man had any other form of weapon.

One of the first group of passengers to be released, Jean-Yves Leheude, described the hijacker as "silver-haired and romantic-looking".

He said that all had been perfectly calm when the aircraft landed and that most of the passengers had disembarked quite normally. "He just insisted that the passengers in the first row should remain behind."

IN BRIEF

Harare frees pressmen to travel

ZIMBABWE'S HIGH court yesterday allowed two pressmen who alleged they were tortured by the military to travel to Britain for medical treatment. Mark Chavunduka, 33, editor of the *Standard*, and Ray Choto, 37, are charged with publishing a false story that an army coup had tried to overthrow President Robert Mugabe in December.

Blast leaves Lusaka with no water

ZAMBIA'S CAPITAL, Lusaka, a city of three million people, was without running water yesterday after a bomb blast destroyed the main water pipeline, officials said. Residents and officials at Lusaka's water utility said that the taps finally dried up early yesterday when the city's main reservoir emptied after Sunday's explosion.

Journalists apologise for report

A BODY covering Ghana's journalists has apologised for announcing the death of the country's most powerful traditional ruler without his family's permission. The Ghana Journalists' Association announced the death of the king of the Ashantis, Otumfuo Opoko Ware II, aged 80.

Evangelicals' singing sit-in

A GROUP of evangelical Christians occupied an administrative building in Siberia yesterday. An official in Russia's Yakutia province said the group demanded compensation for wood they had provided to local residents, but refused to say what they wanted, rejecting offers of money and breaking off talks to sing and pray.

Slain for being young and Christian

Police trying to calm a mob wielding swords and apears in Ambon city yesterday. At least 200 have died in recent clashes *Jonathan Head/AP*

BY RICHARD LLOYD PARRY
in Ambon, Indonesia

IT WAS curiosity that drove Johannes Pattirane to go to where the bodies had been brought, for at that time he had no idea Marlen had gone missing. It was early yesterday morning, and Johannes was at his office in the town of Ambon when he heard about the deaths, the latest in six weeks of bitter religious conflict. A young man and a young woman – a couple, they said – had been found dumped by the side of a jungle road on the outskirts of town.

"I wondered who it was and I went to have a look," he says. "I couldn't believe it."

Lying in the back of a police car were Marlen Sitanola, Johannes's cousin, and her fiance, Lucas Paliama. Their throats had been cut and their ears severed, but the bodies were not stiff, and the wounds were still bleeding. It was 8.30am.

Marlen was 32 years old, and one of the youngest law lecturers at Ambon's Pattimura University. Now, a few feet from where Johannes sits talking in her parents' village home, her students are arriving to see her for the last time. Her body is covered with a towel; her long hair masks the wounds across her throat and her absent right ear. The air in the room is filled with the pungent smell of the embalming fluid, but it is not this which is making the young women weep.

Their families know everything and nothing about what happened to Marlen and Lucas for, while the terrible details of their deaths will probably never be known, the underlying causes are obvious to everyone. They were last seen on Monday, departing by motorbike from Lucas's home on the other side of the island. They were a couple with no enemies, no risky political or business interests, and no possessions worth killing for. But they were locally born, native Ambonese and that alone told their killers as much as they needed to know.

"Marlen was a typical, dark Ambonese type," says one friend. "You could look at her face and tell what religion she was, and that was why she died. She was a Christian – almost all the Ambonese are Christians – and it was Muslims who killed her."

Six weeks ago, this would have been unthinkable in Ambon, the capital of Maluku province, the archipelago within an archipelago which the Dutch colonists called the Spice Islands. The rebellious provinces of East Timor or Aceh, the campuses of Jakarta – these are Indonesia's pressure valves, where the pain of economic collapse and the frustration of partial freedom from dictatorship find violent release. From the air, Ambon still earns its colonial title, "The Queen of the East" – low mountains covered with jungle, floating on the tropical Banda Sea. It is a short-lived idyll. Ambon's plight becomes obvious almost as soon as you get out of the airport.

Five minutes along the coastal road, burned out houses and cars are visible, the homes of Muslims driven out permanently by their Christian neighbours. As the taxi approaches the town of Ambon itself, the driver refuses to go on without what is referred to as "security". Security comes in a khaki uniform and carries a rifle: in the space of four hours yesterday afternoon, I hired three Indonesian soldiers, armed with combat knives and automatic rifles, to sit in the front seat of hired vehicles. Every other driver on the road seemed to be doing the same, at a price of about £7 per soldier per day.

The origins of Ambon's conflicts are obscure, but everyone agrees when it began: on 19 January, a Tuesday. The most commonly related story tells of an argument between a mini-bus driver – a Christian – and a Muslim passenger. After that everything depends on the religion of the person you are talking to. What is certain is that the rioting which began that day in Ambon town, spread with eerie speed throughout the island, which is only 35 miles long and 10 miles across at its widest point. For nearly a week Ambon was closed to the outside world, as the numbers of reported deaths steadily rose. There was a lull and then the violence flared again in February, and again last weekend. The consensus among local reporters is that more than 200 have died.

During the day, normal life is impossible; and at night, fear guarantees a voluntary curfew. Parties of local people, Muslim and Christian, stop cars at makeshift road blocks. Those of the wrong religion are sent back, or worse. The vigilantes carry pistols, bows and poison-tipped arrows, aluminium poles sharpened to spears, and home-made bombs – a speciality of the islands, whose fishermen use them to stun and collect fish above the coral reefs.

Thousands of people, many of them Muslim immigrants from elsewhere in Indonesia, have fled their homes and jobs to live with relatives on other islands. The frequent, but unpredictable, street disturbances close the island's few roads; shops and businesses are often forced to shut. Economic activity is fitful, and cloves, nutmegs and mace which gave the Spice Islands their name cannot be shifted off the island.

For all the confusion, everyone agrees on one thing: that no blame whatsoever can be attached to members of their own religion. "This is the difference between Christians and Muslims," says Johannes Pattirane. "Christians turn the other cheek: we only react when we are attacked." But a few miles away there are Muslims saying the same thing, with equal grief and conviction.

On Monday, at least three of them were killed, allegedly by Christian policemen, after a riot provoked by Christians stoning a mosque. It was in retaliation for this incident that Marlen and Lucas were butchered.

Whether peace comes fast or slow, it is hard to imagine that Ambon can ever be the same again. "I'm losing and forgiving too much," says another of Marlen's cousins, Nan Maatita. "I lost my house, and I forgave the men who burned it, and now I have lost my cousin. But that is too much to forgive. Too much. This is enough."

Albright and China clash over rights

BY TERESA POOLE
in Peking

BLUNT TALK on human rights and irreconcilable views on missile deployment yesterday marked the end of a two-day visit to Peking by the American Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, who nevertheless said that Sino-US relations were strong enough to withstand "even sharp disagreements".

Ms Albright is the most senior US administration official to visit China since Peking launched a crackdown on dissent and sentenced a string of activists to lengthy prison sentences. She said human rights had proved the "most difficult topic" in her meetings with China's leaders. "I made clear that it was very important for there to be a change in the atmosphere, that there had to be an end to the crackdown. There had to be a release of people," she said afterwards.

"Last June our two Presidents agreed to a candid dialogue on human rights. In the last two days we have seen what a candid dialogue looks like. I made clear America's view that a society is more, not less, likely to be stable when citizens have an outlet for the peaceful expression of political views," she said, in reference to the imprisonment of those who had tried to set up the China Democracy Party. But her words brought no concessions from the Chinese side.

Top of Peking's agenda of contentious issues was Washington's plan for a theatre missile defence (TMD) system, which might encompass Taiwan. "I replied that, instead of worrying about a decision that has not been made to deploy defensive technologies that do not yet exist, China should focus its energies on the real source of the problem – the proliferation of missiles," said Ms Albright. She called on China to use its influence to encourage restraint by North Korea on missile development, and to develop dialogue with Taiwan.

Albright: Has had 'candid dialogue' with Chinese

China views American protestations that TMD would be a defensive system as disingenuous at best. The Foreign Ministry spokesman, Zhu Bangzao, said: "The situation on the Korean peninsula is stable and we oppose the move by some countries to use this situation as an excuse to strengthen military alliances and build up defence capabilities. That is not conducive to peace and stability, and may trigger arms races at various levels."

'Call me President' says the general

BY ALEX DUVAL SMITH

GENERAL Olusegun Obasanjo, president-elect of Nigeria's future civilian government, has dismissed claims by international observers and his opponent, Olu Falae, of extensive fraud in Saturday's vote.

In an exclusive interview with The Independent, 63-year-old General Obasanjo said: "More than 17 million Nigerians voted for me. If I am regarded as having been installed by the military then those 17 million people must be military."

Earlier Mr Falae, whose alliance was also accused of election fraud, called for a government of national unity. He planned a legal challenge to the result – 62.78 per cent for General Obasanjo against his 37.22 per cent.

General Obasanjo, who was military head of state for three years from 1976, is best known internationally for having handed power to a civilian in 1979.

But in a country ruled by junta for all but 10 of its 39 years of independence, there are fears that he will preside over a "military democracy" overseen by generals. He will be formally installed for his four-year term on May 29.

Throughout his campaign, General Obasanjo was reticent when questioned and his rhetoric, such as it was, won him no admirers in the international media. He even failed to turn up for the televised election debate, allegedly because the questions were not provided in advance.

Yesterday, the general, as he is called by his aides, was equally unforthcoming, staring at the floor during answers, responding only in vague terms, and ill-at-ease with the spontaneous nature of interviews.

But he relished being asked how he should be addressed in future. He stood up, wearing a pale blue agbada (traditional robe) and silver embroidered bonnet, and raised his voice: "You can call me President Olusegun Obasanjo or President Chief Olusegun Obasanjo or, of course, President General Olusegun Obasanjo."

He was vague about his priorities and backtracked on a pre-election pledge to withdraw Nigerian troops immediately from intervention force duties in Sierra Leone. "Nigeria will always play a part in peace-keeping but we have to see what we can best do without straining our own resources," he said.

All day the general received well-wishers at a suite in the Hilton Hotel in the capital, Abuja, including prominent businessmen who had given financial support.

But he faces glaring economic and social problems, extensive corruption and deepening poverty in tandem with a falling oil price.

The general said: "People talk abont economic and social problems without going back to basics. The basic problem is political. Unless we deal with political issues, we will not make headway on economic issues."

Apparently referring to regional rivalries and conflicts, he added: "I will stretch out my hands of welcome to all Nigerians, no matter what has happened during the election process, until everyone feels they have a stake and belongs to Nigeria.

"Once this process is complete, it will be all hands on deck to eradicate corruption and for people to feel that justice and equity will be done.

"Then we can address issues like communications, energy, lack of water, education, health and the security of life and property. You can see how politics and issues all hang together," he said.

General Obasanjo has three months to complete the transition process in co-operation with the military head of state, General Abdulsalami Abubakar. Yesterday, the Abubakar government finally announced a constitution would be published, probably this week.

The lack of such a document during the election process has been sharply criticised by local and international observers, led by the former United States president Jimmy Carter.

Mr Carter, who headed a delegation of observers, told Nigerian election officials that fraud was so widespread it was impossible to judge whether the results were accurate, though the United States did congratulate Nigeria on a peaceful election, saying it "broadly reflected the will of the Nigerian people".

Clement Nwankwa, director of the Constituional Rights Project, an observer group, said: "The publication oow of the constitution confirms one of our worst fears – that the military was waiting to see who would win the election before deciding which constitution to give us."

The Constitutional Rights Project, other pro-democracy groups and international observers released extensive details of election fraud during Saturday's election.

These included a turnout in the southern Bayelsa State of 122.66 per cent when, in fact, the general impression was of scepticism and lack of interest in voting.

The 10,000 local observers reported several cases of polling station officials being led away at gunpoint while their ballot boxes were stuffed. In Kaduna, 50 children in school uniform were accredited to vote by a teacher

In Kano, in the north, people were said to be selling their votes for 10 naira (6p) and in the oil-producing Niger delta region, monitors said that 30 minutes after an empty ballot box was placed on a polling table, 600 votes were found inside it.

Leading article, Review, page 3

President-elect Olusegun Obasanjo gestures to the crowds on the campaign trail EPA

ANNE MCELVOY

The monarchy has lost no time in riding the wave of devolution

IN THE WEDNESDAY REVIEW PAGE 3

Bush set to launch bid for president

THE RACE to succeed Bill Clinton as President of the United States started in earnest yesterday, with 18 months still to go until the 2000 election.

George W Bush, the Republican Governor of Texas and son of the former president, was due to announce his first steps towards the White House last night. Mr Bush is front-runner to face Al Gore, Mr Clinton's Vice-President and the most likely Democratic candidate. But Mr Bush must first beat the other Republican candidates.

George Bush Jnr begins his wooing of the press

The Bush camp has tried to damp public speculation about his candidacy, while doing everything it could to make sure the press was aware of his intentions. He called a surprise press conference yesterday after his staff had said he would not discuss his intentions until next week, apparently so he could announce his moves to the press in Texas before the rest of the US.

Mr Bush was expected to set up a presidential exploratory committee, the first step towards declaring his candidacy.

BY ANDREW MARSHALL in Washington

He has won plaudits in the state and beyond for what he calls his "compassionate conservativism", which is aimed at distinguishing himself from the rest of the Republican pack.

But the party is seriously divided. Most of the declared or likely candidates are positioning themselves to the right of him, to win support among the part's grassroots activists, and many are focusing their fire on Mr Bush, not the Democrats.

Pat Buchanan, a journalist and former White House official, also declared himself a candidate yesterday. He has set out his position for years as a protectionist, an isolationist and an opponent of abortion.

Mr Buchanan ran unsuccessfully against former president George Bush in 1988 and Robert Dole in 1992. Mr Dole lost to Mr Clinton.

So far, Mr Bush – who was re-elected governor last year by a huge majority – is the favourite for the Republican race. Some polls show either he or Elizabeth Dole, the other Republican front-runner, would beat Mr Gore.

But the election will largely be about money – the ability of candidates to raise huge amounts, keep a big stack through the primaries and then power into the election race.

The primaries, where the parties select their candidates, are compacted into a shorter time period than usual. This will put more emphasis on blocks of states in the South, the Mid-West and the South-West.

Adam Brown demonstrating the decay of pier 25. The marine engineer knows only too well how Manhattan's underside is crumbling *Justin Sutcliffe*

Grim tales at the end of the pier

AMERICAN TIMES
NEW YORK

JUTTING OUT forlornly into the Hudson River near the lower end of Manhattan's West Side, pier 25 is not what it used to be. A golf putting business occupies the section nearest the land – deserted on this cold morning – while the rest is condemned. A chicken-wire fence deters humans from roaming out too far.

My guide, Adam Brown, takes no notice, squeezing open a gate in the fence and striding out to the pier's tip. Years ago, Mr Brown used to live on an old steam tug tied up at the pier. It is still there, but now it rests on the river-bottom with only the stack and part of the superstructure visible above the water.

Much more important, however, is Mr Brown's knowledge of the underside of pier 25 and the platoons of wooden piles that hold it aloft. They are, to put it mildly, rotten and ready to collapse at any moment. I ask the obvious question – are we safe standing where we are? Yes, he replies. Then he notices my photographer wandering more closely to the edge. "But I wouldn't go where he is right now."

Compact and trim at 37, Mr Brown is a diver and a marine engineer. For years, he has inspected the watery underpinnings not just of this pier but of every pier in Manhattan and of everything else fringing the island, including bridges and the four-lane FDR Drive the length of the East Side.

It is a line of business that brings many rewards. Mr Brown is passionate about rivers, the ocean and the marine environment in general. Above water, he is also president of an advocacy group, the Working Waterfront Association, which promotes the renovation of New York's massive waterfront for marine uses. But the diving can be tough also. Mr Brown dives all year, including now when the water around the city is barely above freezing.

"I have an umbilical tube for air and a communications line to the people above me but, when I'm down there, I'm really all alone and it's black and murky. It is a bit like sitting in a closed closet with a flashlight and you only have this three-foot cone of light where you can see anything," he says.

Sometimes that cone reveals unpleasant surprises. Dead pets are quite common. Mr Brown recalls a dive he took a few years ago beneath pier 26, next door to this one, when he bumped into something soft. It turned out to be the horribly distended body of a man that for one moment wrapped an arm around one his shoulders. "He was so inflated it was if his clothes had been spray-painted on to him."

It was about 10 years ago that Mr Brown first began to notice something else going on beneath the waters around Manhattan. Tiny creatures known as marine borers, which for decades had been absent because of high levels of industrial pollution, were starting to make a comeback. They are called borers for a reason – they like to eat timber. Wooden pilings such as the ones beneath this pier are their favourite.

The borers come in two varieties. One is a crustacean, *Limnoria lignorum* (otherwise know as a gribble), the other a mollusc usually referred to as a shipworm. Their return to New York is an ironic side-product of the city's campaign to clean up both the East and Hudson Rivers. Only last week, authorities announced that local striped bass, banned from dinner tables for the past 23 years because of contamination, are now almost fit again for human consumption.

Now the city is faced with paying millions of dollars to repair the damage. Piers will have to be torn down and, in this case – because it is part of a newly designated West Side park – rebuilt. A large section has already broken off, its concrete surface now subsiding crazily into the choppy waters. Meanwhile, a multi-million-dollar contract will soon go out to tender for initial studies into preventing chunks of FDR Drive from falling into the East River. "For a long time, people just didn't believe us. They had forgotten that borers could exist," Mr Brown explains. "Today, they are all over the place and it's getting worse".

On more than one occasion, he has been forced to close sections of road in New York without warning because of what he has found on their undersides. "There are areas where they were driving trucks on top and driving cars on top where there was nothing underneath." Those are the moments Mr Brown confronts the worst of all the dangers of his job – that part of the city might collapse on top of him.

DAVID USBORNE

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BUSINESS

BRIEFING

BUSINESS REVIEW

In today's additional business section:
Centrica's City comeback
How Sir John Hall's sports business dream went wrong
PLUS: Hamish McRae, Jo Davis, Diane Coyle and The Trader

RJB profits and dividend slashed

RJB, Britain's biggest coal producer, yesterday slashed its dividend and outlined plans to expand into Asia-Pacific. Profits were down 70 per cent last year as coal sales to the electricity industry dropped sharply and prices fell.

Richard Budge, chief executive, said RJB could use its 18 per cent stake in Australia's CIM Resources to increase its presence in the region. Pre-tax profits fell from £171m to £50m as coal sales declined by 17 per cent to 26 million tonnes. The payout was cut from 20p to 7p.

Arriva steers towards rail bid

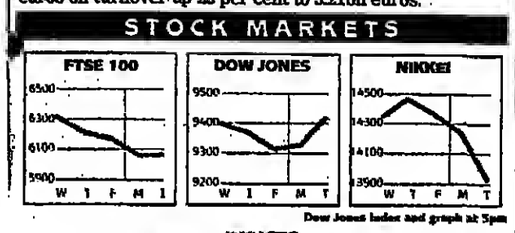
ARRIVA, the bus operator, said it would make a bid at the next round of rail franchises "if the price was right". Bob Davies, chief executive, said it was too early to say which franchises Arriva would be interested in.

The company's UK bus division grew operating profits by 9 per cent, while group pre-tax profits for the year to 31 December fell to £94.5m from £101m in 1997 on turnover of £1.55bn, up from £1.42bn. The shares rose 14.5p to 391.5p.

CRH looks for £680m purchases

CRH, the Irish building materials group, said it could spend up to 1bn euros (£680m) on acquisitions in 1999. Harry Sheridan, finance director, said the group was looking to boost its presence in Poland and Latin America to reduce its reliance on the US and European markets. The group posted a 27 per cent jump in 1998 pre-tax profits to 409m euros on turnover up 23 per cent to 5.21bn euros.

STOCK MARKETS

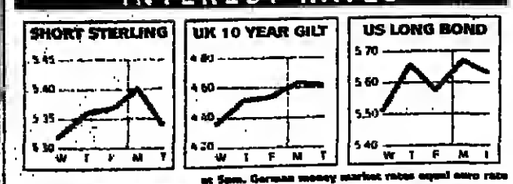


Dow Jones index and graph at 5pm

INDICES

Index	Close	Change	Change(%)	52 wk high	52 wk low	Yield(%)
FTSE 100	6061.30	0.40	0.01	6319.80	4599.20	2.65
FTSE 250	5277.30	18.90	0.36	5970.90	4247.60	3.18
FTSE 350	2880.40	1.80	0.06	2978.70	2210.40	2.73
FTSE All Share	2785.55	1.49	0.05	2886.52	2143.53	2.77
FTSE SmallCap	2276.30	-2.30	-0.10	2799.80	1834.40	3.54
FTSE Fledgling	1247.70	-0.70	-0.06	1517.10	1046.20	4.43
FTSE AIM	829.80	0.20	0.02	1146.90	761.30	1.15
FTSE Eurotop 100	2775.95	5.29	0.19	3079.27	2018.15	2.14
FTSE Eurotop 300	[illegible]	1.35	0.11	1332.07	880.63	2.00
Dow Jones	[illegible]	85.57	0.92	9647.96	7400.30*	1.65
Nikkei	[illegible]	-300.69	-2.11	17352.35	12789.98*	1.02
Hang Seng	9913.58	-106.88	-1.07	11926.16	6544.79*	3.53
DAX	5894.02	19.71	0.41	6217.88	3833.71	1.78
S&P 500	1245.62	9.80	0.79	1283.91	923.32	1.28
Nasdaq	2316.32	21.90	0.95	2533.44	1357.09	0.28
Toronto 300	6291.20	-13.72	-0.22	7837.70	5320.90	1.69
Brazil Bovespa	9150.03	-67.98	-0.74	12339.14	4575.69	6.78
Belgium Bel20	3304.33	4.30	0.13	3713.21	2695.72	2.15
Amsterdam Exch	526.09	-1.22	-0.23	600.65	366.58	1.96
France CAC 40	4048.63	16.58	0.41	4404.94	2881.21	1.95
Milan MIB30	34764.00	-4.00	-0.01	39170.00	24175.00	1.18
Madrid Ibex 35	9873.00	-15.90	-0.16	10989.80	6869.90	1.77
Irish Overall	5291.63	-22.49	-0.42	5581.70	3732.57	1.47
S Korea Comp	533.97	13.91	2.68	651.95	277.87	0.27
Australia ASX	2892.90	-18.30	-0.63	2948.70	2386.70	3.20

INTEREST RATES



at 5pm. German money market rates equal euro rate

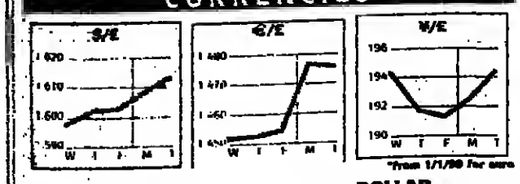
MONEY MARKET RATES

Index	3 month	Yr chg	1 Year	Yr chg
UK	5.44	-2.12	5.39	-2.18
US	5.03	-0.64	5.45	-0.34
Japan	0.26	-0.53	0.29	-0.45
Germany	3.12	-0.40	3.15	-0.61

BOND YIELDS

10 year	Yr chg	Long bond	Yr chg
4.61	-1.43	4.55	-1.42
5.33	0.37	5.63	0.38
1.88	-0.03	2.99	0.47
4.08	-0.85	5.03	-0.47

CURRENCIES



*From 1/1/99 for euro

POUND

	at 5pm	Change	*Yr Ago
Dollar	1.6133	+0.20c	1.6465
Euro	1.4759	-0.06c	1.4079
Yen	194.34	+¥1.46	206.68
$ Index	101.60	+0.00	105.10

DOLLAR

	at 5pm	Change	*Yr Ago
Sterling	0.6198	-0.08p	0.6073
Euro	0.9150	-17.59c	0.8573
Yen	120.46	+¥0.70	125.61
$ Index	108.20	+0.00	108.10

OTHER INDICATORS

	Close	Chg	Yr Ago
Brent Oil ($)	10.25	0.07	13.35
Gold ($)	287.95	1.55	299.50
Silver ($)	5.49	-0.13	6.61

	Index	Chg	Yr ago	Next figs
GDP	115.40	3.00	112.04	Mar
RPI	163.40	2.40	159.57	Feb
Base Rates	5.50		7.25	

Oil at 5pm

SOURCE: BLOOMBERG

www.bloomberg.com/uk

TOURIST RATES

Australia ($)	2.4932
Austria (schillings)	19.68
Belgium (francs)	57.86
Canada ($)	2.3853
Cyprus (pounds)	0.8270
Denmark (kroner)	10.71
Finland (markka)	8.5432
France (francs)	9.3938
Germany (marks)	2.8097
Greece (drachma)	461.97
Hong Kong ($)	12.07
Ireland (punts)	1.1267
Indian (rupees)	61.35
Israel (shekels)	5.9970
Italy (lira)	2786
Japan (yen)	189.52
Malaysia (ringgits)	5.8511
Malta (lira)	0.6145
Mexican (nuevo peso)	14.52
Netherlands (guilders)	3.1550
New Zealand ($)	2.9154
Norway (kroner)	12.48
Portugal (escudos)	285.55
Saudi Arabia (rials)	5.8507
Singapore ($)	2.6386
South Africa (rands)	9.5404
Spain (pesetas)	237.64
Sweden (kronor)	13.00
Switzerland (francs)	2.2891
Thailand (bahts)	54.16
Turkey (liras)	551955
USA ($)	1.5686

Rates are indication purposes only

Source: Thomas Cook

Norwich Union earmarks £750m for annuities

By Andrew Verity

NORWICH UNION yesterday revealed it had set aside £750m to cover the cost of paying guaranteed annuities to customers who bought pensions in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s.

The provision is the largest yet to be revealed in the life industry and reflects NU's exposure to a problem expected to cost the industry a total of £10bn.

Annuity guarantees were for decades used to promote the sale of pension policies for the self-employed. They typically promised a saver an annual retirement income worth at least 12 per cent of the amount saved.

As long as long-term interest rates stayed in double figures – as they did for most of the past 30 years – insurers expected never to lose money on the guarantees.

But last year long-term interest rates plummeted to their lowest level since 1966, leaving a giant gap between what insurers had promised and what they could afford to fund. Many insurers are now reserving hundreds of millions of pounds to cover their exposure to the guarantees.

Richard Harvey, NU chief executive, disclosed the level of the provision for the first time yesterday, ending months of uncertainty over the scale of NU's exposure. He said the company had doubled the level of reserves after the fall in long-term interest rates last year.

"We have always reserved for guaranteed annuities – they are part of an overall business of offering guarantees within [NU]," he said.

The cost of the guarantees will be met from free reserves within the life fund of NU – 10 per cent owned by shareholders – slightly eroding the company's financial strength. NU's free asset ratio – the headline measure of financial strength – fell from 15 to 12.9 last year.

NU also said its shareholders, including 1.3 million policyholders who kept their shares when the insurer de-mutualised in 1997, will receive a 10 per cent rise in dividend to 12.8p a share.

The company turned in operating earnings up 11 per cent, boosted by a 6 per cent growth in new business worldwide. Mr Harvey said the company planned to raise general insurance premiums by 5 to 10 per cent in the coming year.

He added NU was on target to deliver £30m a year in cost savings following its purchase of London & Edinburgh, the general insurer, last autumn.

Bundesbank steps in to boost ailing euro

By Diane Coyle and Lea Paterson

EUROPEAN CENTRAL banks have stepped in for the first time to support the euro on the foreign exchanges. The Bundesbank intervened in the market yesterday as the new currency hovered near record lows, according to traders.

The intervention to try and support the euro came as officials signalled that the European Central Bank would resist political pressure to cut interest rates this week. Analysts believe the weakness of the exchange rate is one of the main factors holding back the ECB.

The euro, which has depreciated against the world's major currencies since its launch, closed at a record low against sterling of 67.6p. It has lost 5 per cent against the pound this year.

But it pulled back from Monday's low against the dollar following the widespread rumours of market intervention. The European currency was trading at $1.095, up from Monday's low of $1.085.

Traders at several leading banks said the Bundesbank had been selling both sterling and the dollar in exchange for the new European currency.

"The Bundesbank has apparently been involved in the market today and it seems that other national central banks have been in and out of the market over the last few days," said one trader.

At another bank, the director of currency research, said: "Our traders say that Buba [the Bundesbank] has been intervening in both dollar/euro and sterling/euro."

The weakness of the euro is expected to prevent the ECB from taking any action on rates this week. Ernst Welteke, a prominent Bundesbank council member, said yesterday: "There is a big questionmark about whether a further reduction in rates would boost growth."

Ottmar Issing, chief economist of the ECB, and Christian Noyer, a French member of its council, made similar remarks earlier this week.

The refusal to budge on interest rates has pitted the central bank against politicians – notably Oskar Lafontaine, Germany's finance minister – calling on the ECB to boost demand. As this makes the central bank less likely to act, observers see the manoeuvres as a means of making sure the bankers get the blame for potential economic problems.

"Less than three months into the euro we are seeing some political tensions," said Graham Bishop of Salomon Brothers. He added that with a weak currency, strong monetary growth and uncomfortably high wage settlements in Germany, there was not a clear economic case for an interest rate reduction.

However, figures yesterday showed inflation in the 11 euro comtries was stable at just 0.8 per cent in January. The level of prices fell 0.1 per cent during the month.

Some dealers said it was unclear whether the Bundesbank was actively trying to support the euro yesterday or simply engaging in run-of-the-mill commercial activities. One said: "It may have been a genuine order from Buba. If it was intervention, it was on a pretty small scale."

Analysts said rumours of central bank attempts to prop up the ailing European currency would become more common if the euro's weakness persisted.

One analyst said: "We've had a sharp depreciation in the exchange rate and it's only natural the market is a bit jittery."

The Bundesbank refused to confirm or deny the reports. A spokesman said: "We do not comment on rumours as a matter of principle."

Calls for further rate cut as pay rises slow

By Lea Paterson and Diane Coyle

BUSINESS AND unions called on the Bank of England to cut interest rates again after new figures showed a marked slowdown in the growth of average earnings. The pay figures were relaunched yesterday after a four-month suspension as the Bank's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) began its two-day meeting.

The outline of next week's Budget was sketched to the MPC by the Treasury representative. Some analysts thought this meant that the MPC would wait another month to avoid appearing to prejudge the Chancellor, but others predicted a quarter-point cut in rates at noon today.

Kate Barker, chief economic adviser at the Confederation of British Industry, called for an interest-rate cut of at least another quarter point. This would be the sixth reduction in as many months.

Treasury minister Patricia Hewitt unveiling the report of the inquiry into earnings data yesterday *Tom Craig*

However, the new average earnings figures vindicated the Bank's unpopular decision to raise interest rates last June. Pay growth did pick up sharply in the spring as the original official figures – but not a subsequent revised set – had shown.

The new figures show that the headline rate of earnings, which excludes bonuses, peaked at 5.7 per cent in May – well above the 4.5 per cent limit the Bank considers compatible with its inflation target. But the earnings growth rate fell to 4.2 per cent in December, reveals new Office for National Statistics data.

Mervyn King, Bank Deputy Governor of the Bank, said the MPC had been briefed on the progress of the pay data inquiry "at various stages". However, the committee did not have details of the new figures until Monday.

Patricia Hewitt, the Treasury minister, said: "What we still have to do, and will do, is strengthen arrangements for the integrity and independence of official statistics." A White Paper on greater independence for the ONS will be published by the summer.

Dr Tim Holt, ONS director, who first raised concerns about the figures, said: "In short, we got it wrong and on behalf of the ONS I wish to apologise for that. Errors of judgement were made, but at all times ONS staff acted in good faith."

Hewlett Packard goes for radical remake

By David Usborne in New York

HEWLETT-PACKARD, one of the biggest names of California's Silicon Valley, announced yesterday that it intends remaking itself. The company, which has recently lagged behind rivals in share performance and profits, announced a radical plan to split itself into two new entities.

One company will retain the main computer and imaging businesses that Hewlett-Packard has become best known for among consumers.

The rest will be spun away to form an entirely new company encompassing its lower profile divisions that manufacture test and measuring equipment.

"We are taking this action to sharpen the strategic focus of our businesses, and improve their agility and responsiveness to customers and partners," said Lewis Platt, the company president, yesterday. Shares in HP rose sharply yesterday in New York after a delayed opening.

After a firecracker period in the early 1990s, when printers in particular drew in revenues, HP has faded. Harsh price competition in the PC market ate into profits and the company's important server division was hurt by rivals Sun Microsystems and IBM.

Meanwhile, HP shares have risen 17 per cent over the past two years, well below many others in the valley.

By announcing the split, the company is following the path trodden by other American leviathans who were also seeking to boost their fortunes. They have included, in recent years, AT&T, which spun off its equipment divisions to form Lucent, as well as ITT Corporation.

No name has yet been chosen for the new measurements and testing devices company. It will operate entirely independently, however, with its own board of directors. Current holders of HP shares will receive shares in both companies, according to a plan approved by directors yesterday.

HP added that it is considering an initial public offering of about 15 per cent of the measurement company's outstanding shares by the end of this year. If it goes ahead, it will be the largest IPO ever taken in Silicon Valley.

HP is a veritable granddaddy compared with most of its rivals. Founded in a suburban garage in 1938 by Bill Hewlett and David Packard, both electrical engineers, it began life by selling audio oscillators to the Walt Disney Company.

From there, it quickly expanded to produce a variety of high-technology equipment.

The company has annual revenues of $47bn, of which $40bn comes from the computer and imaging businesses.

Directors' bonuses anger Alldays investors

By Nigel Cope
Associate City Editor

DIRECTORS OF the Alldays convenience store chain are facing a backlash from institutional investors after the payment of large bonuses last year during which the company's shares lost 90 per cent of their value.

Colin Glass, the chief executive, was paid a bonus of £104,000, the equivalent of 42 per cent of his annual salary. George Leckie, the finance director, received an £81,000 bonus equivalent to 55 per cent of salary. The "special one-off payments" were made for the "successful disposal" of the group's food service business, which was sold to Brake Bros for £43.6m in November.

The bonuses were paid in spite of a calamitous year for the group which saw the shares fall from 621.5p last spring to a low of 62.5p in February following a profits' collapse and a warning on trading.

One investor with a major stake in the company said: "We will be asking them to justify it when we see them next. It does not look good."

Pirc, the corporate governance specialist, added: "We have severe reservations about certain aspects of the corporate governance structure, particularly regarding remuneration."

Alldays revealed that it had originally intended the bonuses to be higher but they were scaled back after the group's trading difficulties became apparent.

Colin Glass' bonus was originally £175,000 before the adjustment. Mr Leckie was paid the full amount because he had already used the money to settle a capital gains tax liability. His bonus will be adjusted next year, the company said.

Justifying the payments a spokesman for Alldays said: "They were for securing a better than expected price for the sale of a business to the only realistic buyer."

The shares closed 4p lower at 72.5p.

AROUND THE WORLD'S MARKETS

LONDON

The London market moved sideways yesterday as institutions sat it out ahead of today's interest-rate decision. The FTSE 100 ended just 0.4 points higher at 6,061.3 in thin volumes. The small cap followed, closing 2.3 lower at 2,276.3. Bid rumours helped the FTSE 250 to do better, closing 18.9 up at 5,277.3, its highest this year.

Rentokil Initial was the biggest blue-chip faller, marked down as it failed to meet its 20 per cent earnings growth target.

Market report, page 19

NEW YORK

US STOCKS were trading higher yesterday, led by the technology group Hewlett-Packard, which announced plans to split itself into two.

"The Hewlett-Packard news brings a better tone to the market, which has been in a kind of holding pattern," said one trader.

The Dow Jones index was trading up 83.13 points at 9,407.91. The high-technology Nasdaq index was 21.13 points higher at 2,316.31.

TOKYO

THE NIKKEI INDEX fell below the key 14,000 index yesterday for the first time since early February.

Shares initially gained following falls in the yen – sparked by record Japanese unemployment data. However, unwinding of corporate cross-shareholdings later in the day took the index more than 2 per cent lower. The Nikkei closed at 13,921.06, down 300.69 points.

New official data revealed Japan's jobless rate hit 4.4 per cent in January. The figures sent the dollar back over the 120 yen barrier.

SAO PAULO

BRAZILIAN shares slipped soon after the opening, with investors nervously eyeing the Brazilian real. The currency hit a new record low of 2.23 to the dollar, forcing the central bank to intervene. One trader said the honeymoon period following the appointment of the new central bank president last month was over, and the market neded to see action. Yesterday afternoon, the benchmark Bovespa share index was trading 67.03 points, or 0.73 per cent, lower at 9130.97.

FRANKFURT

GERMAN shares ended modestly higher, boosted by early gains on Wall Street. However, overall sentiment remained gloomy amid concern over economic prospects. This was underlined when the Chambers of Commerce downgraded its 1999 growth forecast from 2 to 1.5 per cent. The electronic Xetra DAX ended up 18.77 points at 4,797.84.

Shares Preussag group climbed 2.35 per cent amid rumours of a possible bid for the UK company, First Choice Holidays.

Fund	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld	Init. Chrg %
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

Why Bank can feel quietly satisfied

OUTLOOK

WHEN Tim Holt, director of the Office for National Statistics, apologised yesterday for the fiasco his organisation had made of calculating and revising official figures for average earnings, he would have added an extra, silent message of contrition to the Bank of England. All users expect official statistics to be accurate and reliable, but it is crucial for the Bank's judgement about interest rates.

The reason is that official figures are the only defence against anecdotal evidence, the heavy artillery used by business lobby groups and industry in their attack on the MPC's decisions. Any industrialist or manufacturing union can reel off job losses here and low pay settlements there. The Bank can only set what it thinks will be the right rate for the whole economy by having the full picture, and the only way to get the full picture is to look at comprehensive, national data based on a wide sample, properly weighted and adjusted for seasonal fluctuations.

When the MPC raised interest rates to their peak of 7.5 per cent in June, the official average earnings figures were the last piece of a jigsaw portraying a generally tight labour market. Although not decisive in themselves, they helped tip the balance of argument in the monetary meeting. But the move was so unpopular with the business lobby that there was general rejoicing – and later fury in Threadneedle Street – when the ONS revised the figures to show average earnings growth slowing rather than accelerating in the spring.

The Bank can now feel quietly satisfied that what looks to have been a very thorough review of the average earnings figures has resulted in a series that looks much more like the original picture before the ONS started fiddling with it.

The context is now wholly different, however. Growth has slowed to near standstill, the international backdrop is as depressed as ever, and inflation remains near its target. So although pay is rising at an underlying rate of 4.5 per cent, the Bank's tolerance limit, it does not have the automatic implication that interest rates won't fall again.

In fact, the downward trend in earnings, albeit from a higher than expected peak, encouraged the financial markets to be a bit more hopeful yesterday about the possibility of a rate cut. News about economic activity since last month's MPC meeting has been more upbeat. On the other hand, there remains no sign of inflationary pressure.

The complicating factor this month is next week's Budget. The MPC will already know its broad outline so that it can base its judgement on whatever fiscal stance the Chancellor has decided to adopt. The committee might calculate that if it does cut rates, this will be read as a vote of no-confidence in growth prospects. And if it doesn't cut rates, this might be taken as a sign of a loosening of fiscal policy to come. In these circumstances, the only proper course for the MPC is to ignore how its actions might be interpreted, and simply weigh up all the hard facts – with a bit more confidence in their accuracy after yesterday's review.

Euro weakness

YOU WOULD think that by now Oskar Lafontaine and his deputy at the German finance ministry, Heiner Flassbeck, might have learned their lesson. Everytime they open their mouths to berate the European Central Bank for not cutting interest rates fast enough, it only makes all those independently thinking central bankers more determined than ever not to follow their advice.

This is becoming an ever more silly and damaging game of who blinks first. We cannot be seen to do what the politicians tell us, the ECB seems to say, as that would damage our credibility. So we can't cut rates, even if we thought there might be a case for it. So silly has the process become that Mr Flassbeck might be more likely to achieve his desired aim if he were to demand a rate increase than by speaking his mind.

Meanwhile, the euro seems to have been born a sickly infant. As yet it is unclear whether this is more to do with the weakness of the German and French economies than the likely counter cyclical direction of European and American interest rates. The ECB claims to have no exchange rate target, or indeed to take the exchange rate into account at all in making its interest rate decisions. But plainly currency weakness has become as good an excuse as any for not cutting rates.

Politicians are a devious lot, and there is certainly a degree of "blame management" in whatever Mr Lafontaine has to say about the ECB. By blaming the ECB, he can to some extent deflect attention from his own policy mistakes. By the same token, it makes good sense politically to make the ECB a scapegoat for the euro's wider problems. If the euro is a disaster, it won't be the politicians who invented it who are to blame, but the ECB. Even so, it can reasonably be assumed that Messrs Lafontaine and Flassbeck do genuinely want interest rate cuts.

So how can the ECB be persuaded to do its duty? One possibility is that politicians have chose too simplistic a target. A big problem with the ECB as presently constituted is that it has no proper inflation target. The main instrument for determining policy is monetary targeting, commensurate with the general target of keeping inflation below 2 per cent. There is little guidance as to what this means, though it is generally assumed the ECB wouldn't pursue price deflation as a policy objective. Even so, the assumed range of 0 to 2 per cent creates a ready zone of inactivity, and potential for exactly the sort of paralysis the ECB now seems to be suffering from.

By contrast, the Bank of England's inflation target is a symmetrical one. It is as much of an offense to overshoot on the downside as on the upside. This seems such an eminently sensible approach to reconciling the policy aim of full employment with that of low inflation that it is amazing our European partners haven't yet seen fit to copy it.

Pensions

FOR PEOPLE who have been saving for their pension with Norwich Union, yesterday's confirmation that it is setting aside £750m to pay for annuity guarantees must have a satisfying ring about it. For most pension savers, this year is possibly the worst year to retire in decades. The reason is that annuity rates - which determine the rate of retirement income yielded by their pension savings - have hit their lowest level since the sixties. Five years ago, a £100,000 pension fund could buy a retirement income of over £13,000 a year; now it is closer to £8,000 a year.

Norwich Union savers who bought policies in the seventies and eighties have been insulated from the problem. Their policies typically guaranteed an annual retirement income well into double figures. As Norwich Union guaranteed these rates, it must now pay them regardless of how low they have sunk.

In a sense, such savers are doubly fortunate. Their pension funds are already swollen by the lengthy bull-run on the stock market since the early 1970s. So even if annuity rates have fallen, the impact on retirement incomes is offset by the greater capital value of their pension savings. In other words, those with guarantees are getting the upside of the bull-run without the downside of falling yields. Unfortunately, other policyholders – those without the guarantees – are paying for that double benefit. The £750m provision to pay for the guarantees is coming out of Norwich Union's long-term fund, 90 per cent owned by policyholders.

BoS links with US evangelist in telephone banking deal

BY ANDREW GARFIELD
Financial Editor

ANK OF SCOTLAND is joining rces with the flamboyant merican television evangelist Robertson to launch a new lephone banking venture in the nited States.

The operation, to be called the [illegible] Bank, is modelled on Sainsbury's Bank, the nt venture between Bank of otland and the supermarket oup that pioneered branchless nking in the UK in 1997.

Bank of Scotland will be the ajority shareholder in the new nture and provide the know-w, while sub-contracting the eration of the call centre and k office to Marshall & Illsley, S financial services group sed in Wisconsin.

Applications for regulatory roval were filed with the erican authorities yesterday.

No final decision had yet been taken on where and when to launch the venture. However, it is expected to be ready for launch within five months, starting probably in the Mid-west, where Dr Robertson has a strong following, before rolling out nationally as demand dictates.

Peter Burt, Bank of Scotland group chief executive, said the venture, if successful, would cost the bank some "tens of millions of dollars" in the first year. "There are no front-end costs. If successful, we will require capital to fund the bank. But it is structured in such a way as to limit the downside."

As with Sainsbury's Bank, the venture will start by offering high-interest deposits before expanding into other products.

Dr Robertson is a controversial figure in the US. A daring of the Christian right, he ran unsuccessfully for president in 1988 on an unashamedly right-wing programme.

He is best known for having founded the Christian Broadcasting Network, a religious television channel that he sold to Rupert Murdoch for $1.5bn in 1997.

Mr Burt said the idea for the venture had come from Bill Hendry, who heads up Bank of Scotland's existing US operations and who first raised the idea with the American TV evangelist a year ago.

Mr Burt said the bank would be managed at arm's length from Dr Robertson's other business activities, adding that it would be improper to mix what is a purely commercial venture with Dr Robertson's "charitable and religious works".

"He has a tremendous track record as a successful entrepreneur," Mr Burt said.

Dr Robertson, whose forebears left Scotland in 1695 – the same year Bank of Scotland was founded by a decree of the Scottish Parliament – said yesterday: "The objective is to provide the American consumer with a bank that is committed to service and value. Bank of Scotland brings unparalleled experience of service-oriented banking combined with a real understanding of the power of branding and marketing in start-up banking operations."

Pat Robertson: The bank will be run at arm's length from the controversial evangelist's other businesses

Independent group in Australian sale

BY OUR CITY STAFF

INFORMA, the exhibitions and publications group that was created in December by the merger of LLP and IBC, yesterday added Australia's oldest maritime newspaper, the *Daily Commercial News*, to its stable.

Informa is buying the title for A$11m (£4.5m) from APN News & Media, the Australian media group in which Independent Newspapers, owner of *The Independent*, has a 33 per cent stake.

Informa plans to combine the *Daily Commercial News*, which was set up in 1891, with its own title, *Lloyd's List Australian Weekly*. From April, a combined paper will be published three times a week.

David Gilbertson, Informa's chief executive, said the acquisition would "enable Informa to offer an unrivalled information service to the Australian import and export community". The title has 4,000 subscribers and last year made a pre-tax profit of A$900,000 on turnover of A$4.5m.

The news emerged as APN reported a 16 per cent increase in pre-abnormal net profit after tax and minorities to A$35.3m for the year to last December, the sixth year of growth since the company was floated in 1992.

The rise was driven by a 15 per cent increase in operating profits from the broadcasting division and a 10 per cent profits hike from the outdoor advertising unit, which was helped by the accelerating interest in the Olympic Games, to be held in Sydney next year.

MAIN MOVERS

RISES

	PRICE(P)	CHG(P)	%CHG
Biocompatible	91.00	19.00	14.00
Mining Corp	77.50	7.00	9.93
Leeds Sport	19.75	75.00	8.72
Chem Bros	850.50	60.00	6.17
Axion Group	63.50	5.00	8.55
Edinburgh FII	276.50	20.00	7.80
Bonzer Grp	186.50	13.00	7.49
Mayflower	166.00	11.00	7.10
Jarvis Hotel	113.50	7.00	7.08
Old English	144.00	8.00	7.06

FALLS

	PRICE(P)	CHG(P)	%CHG
Henfold Intl	400.75	-48.00	-10.70
BPP Holdings	450.00	-50.00	-10.70
BJB Mining	62.50	-7.50	-10.10
Fairview Hld	91.00	-8.00	-8.00
Weir Grp	242.50	-22.00	-8.49
Druid Grp	1400.00	-120.00	-7.89
Harvey Nichs	357.50	-30.00	-7.74
Hickson Intl	36.00	-3.00	-7.69
Abbot Ding	465.00	-35.00	-7.00
Compass Grp	746.50	-44.00	-5.83

MARKET LEADERS

TOP 20 VOLUMES at 5pm

Stock	Vol.	Stock	Vol.	Stock	Vol.	Stock	Vol.
Shell Transp-Rep		Gen Elec Plc	13.97m	Compass Group	11.06m	Arcadia Grp Plc	9.23m
20.40m		BP Amoco Plc	14.43m	Mayflower Corp	10.57m	Centrica Plc	9.17m
NFI Furniture	20.05m	Auto Group Plc	14.23m	BG Plc	9.87m	Racson Plc	8.70m
Rentokil Initial	18.39m	Brit Aerospace	13.52m	Brit Telecom	9.65m	Hays Plc	7.52m
Marks & Spencer	18.17m	Vodafone Gp Plc	12.91m	Sainsbury Plc	9.23m	Vodafone Group	7.46m

FTSE 100 INDEX

HOUR BY HOUR

Open	5960.0			11:00	5982.9	Up 2.0	15:00	5978.2	Up 17.3
9:00	5980.0	Up 0.0		12:00	5984.6	Down 1.3	16:00	6058.5	Down 1.5
10:00	5984.0	Up 8.1		13:00	5983.8	Down 12.1	Close	5981.3	Up 0.4
				14:00	5985.3	Up 25.8			

GOVERNMENT SECURITIES

INDEX-LINKED

52 week High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	Red Yld	Cpn	Mat
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treasury 2.5 21	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	2.5	21
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treasury 4.375 04	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	4.375	04
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treasury 2.5 06	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	2.5	06
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treasury 2.5 11	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	2.5	11
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treasury 2.5 13	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	2.5	13
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treasury 4.125 20	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	4.125	20
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treasury 2.5 24	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	2.5	24

PERPETUAL

52 week High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Cpn	Mat
[illegible]	[illegible]	Con 2.5% Perp	21.45	0.14	4.88	1000		
[illegible]	[illegible]	Con 0.5% Perp	80.88	0.14	4.85	3131		
[illegible]	[illegible]	Con 3% Perp	71.17	0.18	4.61	3132		
[illegible]	[illegible]	War 3.5% Perp	73.38	0.83	4.77	3230		
[illegible]	[illegible]	Con 4% Perp	79.73	-1.31	5.02	1005		

SHORTS

52 week High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Cpn	Mat
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treasury 9.5% 03	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	9.5	03

MEDIUMS

52 week High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Cpn	Mat
[illegible]	[illegible]	Con 8% 00	103.90	0.08	4.85	2110		
[illegible]	[illegible]	Con 13% 00	110.80	0.80	4.86	2112		
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treasury 8% 03	104.90	0.06	5.01	3435		

LONGS

52 week High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Cpn	Mat
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treasury 10% 01	109.20	0.05	5.04	3007		
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treasury 7% 01	106.16	0.14	4.92	3207		
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treasury 7% 02	108.49	0.19	4.83	4001		
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treasury 8.75% 02	115.25	0.10	4.84	3000		
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treasury 0% 03	112.24	0.20	4.79	0007		
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treasury 11.5% 04	119.52	0.16	5.00	0101		
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treasury 8% 04	98.57	0.11	4.25	2108		
[illegible]	[illegible]	Con 6.5% 04	103.00	0.21	4.78	1007		
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treasury 6.75% 04	110.30	0.24	4.80	0479		
[illegible]	[illegible]	Con 8.5% 05	124.52	0.14	4.83	0470		
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treasury 8.5% 05	121.43	0.18	4.79	3323		
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treasury 7.75% 06	113.20	0.13	4.83	0068		
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treasury 7% 06	109.82	0.27	4.86	2128		
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treasury 7.3% 06	117.40	0.13	4.70	4002		
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treasury 11.75% 07	123.40	-0.23	5.07	2132		
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treasury 8.0% 21	123.18	0.08	4.83	3198		
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treasury 7.25% 07	117.73	0.09	4.79	3010		
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treasury 9% 08	132.83	0.14	4.71	3434		
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treasury 8% 08	128.92	-0.28	4.74	3104		

FTSE 350

52 week High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
[illegible]	[illegible]	ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	BANKS	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	BREWERIES PUBS & REST	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	BUILDING CONSTRUCTION	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	CHEMICALS	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	DISTRIBUTORS	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	ELECTRICITY	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	ELECTRONICS	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	ENGINEERING	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	ENGINEERING VEHICLES	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRIES	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	FOOD PRODUCERS	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	GAS DISTRIBUTION	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	HEALTH CARE	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	HOUSEHOLD GOODS	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	INSURANCE	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	INVESTMENT TRUSTS	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	LEISURE & HOTELS	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	LIFE ASSURANCE	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	MEDIA	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	OIL INTEGRATED	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	OIL EXP. & PROD.	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	OIL EQUIPMENT & SERVICES	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	PAPER & PRINTING	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	PHARMACEUTICALS	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	PROPERTY	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	OTHER FINANCIAL	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	RETAILERS, FOOD	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	RETAILERS, GENERAL	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	SUPPORT SERVICES	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	TELECOMMUNICATIONS	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	TOBACCO	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	TRANSPORT	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	WATER	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

FTSE 250

52 week High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
[illegible]	[illegible]	AIM	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	OIL INTEGRATED	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	OIL EXP. & PROD.	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	OIL EQUIPMENT & SERVICES	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	PAPER & PRINTING	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	PHARMACEUTICALS	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	PROPERTY	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	OTHER FINANCIAL	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	RETAILERS, FOOD	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	RETAILERS, GENERAL	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	SUPPORT SERVICES	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	TELECOMMUNICATIONS	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	TOBACCO	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	TRANSPORT	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	WATER	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

SHARE PRICE DATA

Prices are in sterling except where stated. Price reflects the official closing mid price. Sector movements are based on the FTSE-350. The yield is the latest 12 months' declared gross dividend as a percentage of the share price. The price/earnings (P/E) also is the share price divided by last year's earnings per share, excluding extraordinary items but including exceptionals. Other details: Ex rights; x Ex-dividend; a Ex-all; s Suspended; p Partly Paid; np Nil Paid; Gilt Prices are Bloomberg Generics. Source: Bloomberg

THE INDEPENDENT TELESHARE - TEL 09001 - 201 200

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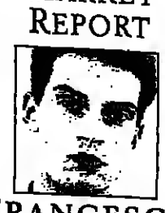
For help with the service, including the Portfolio facility, call the Help Desk on 0870-600-4200 (TIS plc, London EC2A 4PJ). 09001 calls cost 60p per minute.

هكذا من الأصل

Compass sell-off helps point FTSE downhill

MARKET REPORT



FRANCESCO GUERRERA

COMPASS, the catering group, yesterday served up a tasteless dish that left investors scrambling for the exit.

The flea in the ointment came courtesy of Accor, the French restaurant giant with a 19 per cent stake in the UK group. The Parisian gourmets decided to issue a dishy bond which can be converted in Compass shares at any time between now and 2002.

The fixed-income instrument, worth 390m euros – more than £265m – enables the French, which once held some 42 per cent of Compass, to get out of the former Grand Met's clutches. But it is also a neat way to hedge risks on Compass as investors can sit on the bond and wait to see how the share price moves before deciding whether to convert.

The trick is that the conversion price is set at a 26-30 per cent premium to the current share price, suggesting that punters will rush to convert if the stock rises. "It's a great instrument for those who are worried about Compass valuation. If the shares take off they can convert, but if they fall, they stay with the bond," one insider said.

The appearance of the bond prompted several investors and hedge funds to sell Compass and buy the bond. The switch left the stock, one of the great outperformers of recent times, more than 44.5p lower at 746.5p in a hefty volume of nearly 12m shares.

Compass was saved the embarrassment of the FTSE 100 wooden spoon by Rentokil Initial. The hygiene group, down 48p to 400.75p, cleaned up as the *worst-performing* blue chip after missing out on its 20 per cent earnings growth target for the first time in 13 years. Brokers rushed to downgrade 1999 profits by some £15m on worries that Rentokil's soaraway success is finally coming to an end.

The catering and cleaning tribulations were a rare spot of excitement in a dull day. The FTSE 100 index closed a mere 0.4 ahead at 6,061.3 in thin volume as a number of big hitters stuck to the sidelines ahead of today's interest rate decision.

Allied Domecq was in good spirits on renewed talk of a demerger of its drinks and pubs subsidiaries. The stock fizzed 4p up to 477p, as analysts highlighted the takeover attraction of the two components and said that a split Allied is worth around 560p.

Allied's booze brands, which include Beefeater gin and Teacher's scotch, will be a great catch for the Canadian group Seagram or the US rum giant Bacardi. The underperforming pubs could be sold to a UK brewer.

Insurers were in good form, buoyed by a positive general insurance result from Norwich Union, up 5p to 451.75p.

CGU latched on to its rival's good news and soared 43p to 928p. A Goldman Sachs "outperform" recommendation also helped. Royal & Sun jumped on the bandwagon and finished up 21.75p to 533.25p.

GEC continued to live off Monday's purchase of the US telecom equipment company Reltec, and put on 20p to 536p. GUS, the catalogue retailer which owns Argos, ordered a 26p advance to 822p as Merril Lynch set a 875p price target. Marks & Spencer was still reeling from Monday's gloomy note from WestLB and lost 16.25p to 395p.

The undercard was a much happier place, with the recent bid fever showing no sign of abating. A string of good results also helped and the FTSE 250 rose 18.9 to 5,277.3, the highest since the beginning of the year. The Small Cap marked time and ended 2.3 lower at 2,276.3.

British Land developed a 21p rise to 529.5p. The talk is that the float of Canary Wharf could prompt the property group to spin off its Broadgate complex in the City of London. Land Securities followed suit with a 14p rise to 837.5p, and MEPC, up 10p to 480p, completed the property hat-trick.

Housebuilders were looking solid thanks to Redrow's optimism on the much-hated planning delays. Beazer led the pack with a 13p increase to 186.5p, Wilson Bowden was 40p higher to 623.5p, Barrat grew 10.5p to 273.5p, while Wimpey, the biggest of the lot, built an 8.5p rise to 142.5p.

In a related sector, Brandon Hire, the equipment group, climbed 11p to 99.5p. Rival Hewden Stuart is believed to have had a look.

Weir, the Scottish pump maker, was left high and dry after its rebuffed US suitor Flowserve refused to table another offer. The stock fell 2.5p to 242.5p as the prospect of a 400p-a-share bid disappeared.

The bid target First Choice suffered a 2.5p fall to 177.5p on profit-taking after Monday's spike. The hyperactive Philips & Drew declared a 11 per cent stake in the stalked travel group. Express Dairies went off 5.5p to 115.5p on talk of a big shake-up at the Milk Marque, the organisation that control the milk's price.

Cookson, the bombed-out engineer, fell 7p to 154.5p on speculative selling ahead of today's results.

Jardine Lloyd Thompson, the insurer, and Arriva, the transport group, were part of the good results' brigade. JLT rose 12p to 182p as merger benefits helped the 1998 figures, while Arriva travelled 14.5p higher to 391.5p as Warburg and Albert E Sharp said "buy".

Close Brother reversed Monday's fall with a 58p rise to 690.5p as brokers upgraded after the interims and the market woke up to the appointment of the former Warburg chief David Scholey as the new chairman.

Among the minnows, Petra Diamond, the exploration group, dug up a 35 per cent rise to 81.5p after winning a South African contract.

EXPECT SOME activity in Bula Resources after a board shakeup announced after the market closed.

Albert Reynolds, the former Irish prime minister, is the new chairman of the oil exploration company, unchanged at 1p yesterday. Tony Peart, a Lasmo veteran, becomes managing director. The high-profile appointments come with a £1.75m placing at 1p. Funds will be used to back ventures in Libya and Iraq.

LUKE JOHNSON, the Pizza Express entrepreneur, yesterday bought a 4.17 per cent stake in GEI International, a maker of packaging machines. Mr Johnson's knack for putting undervalued companies into play triggered a 6p rise in the shares to 44.5p. The company has seen its share price collapse from 114.5p in the last few months amid worries over market conditions. Despite yesterday's rise, the shares are well below GEI's asset value of 61p.

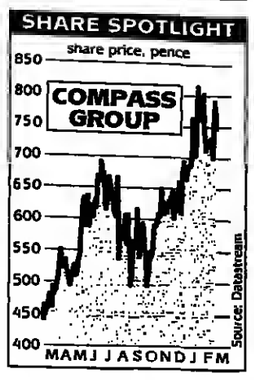
Provend, a drinks machine-maker, enjoyed a 31p rise to 148.5p after toasting a bid approach.

Takeover rumours were swirling around the money broker Trio, up 1.5p to 10.75p, after Monday's decision by a major shareholder to sell its stake.

CCI, a former clay pigeon shooting outfit, completed its reverse takeover of the Xavier computer group, unchanged at 16p. From today, the new Aim-traded company will be called XKO.

SEAQ VOLUME: 964.8M
SEAQ TRADES: 76,104
GILTS INDEX: 112.97 +0.07

SHARE SPOTLIGHT



INVESTMENT

Rentokil misses target for first time in 13 years

BY PETER THAL LARSEN

RENTOKIL INITIAL, the business services group, yesterday failed to live up to its self-imposed growth target for the first time in 13 years when it reported an 18 per cent increase in earnings per share for the year to last December.

The rise falls just short of Rentokil's aim of raising its earnings per share by a fifth each year – a target the company had met so consistently it had earned Sir Clive Thompson, its chief executive, the nickname "Mr Twenty Per Cent".

Shares in Rentokil lost over 10 per cent of their value yesterday, dropping 48p to 400.75p. However, analysts said the fall was not the result of the company missing its target but was due to Rentokil reporting almost no turnover growth last year.

Sir Clive yesterday said the company had failed, even through an analysis of Rentokil's results showed that, allowing for exchange rate movements, the company's earnings per share had increased by 22 per cent.

Growth was also affected by the Asian crisis, with Rentokil's profits in the region falling 24 per cent last year. In the United States, profits increased by only 12 per cent after Rentokil decided to eliminate low-margin contracts and sell some of its resorts management division.

Sir Clive insisted that Rentokil would maintain 20 per cent earnings growth as a target, although it was unlikely to be met so consistently in the future. "If you achieve it 80 per cent of the time you're doing well," he said.

However, observers said Rentokil would have to concentrate on lifting its sales if it was to continue increasing its earnings. In the year to December, Rentokil's revenues increased by just 0.8 per cent to £2.90bn. Even adjusting for exchange rate movements, the increase was no more than 3.4 per cent.

"If you buy into a company with no apparent turnover growth you're basically taking the future on trust from the management," one analyst said.

Sir Clive said Rentokil would seek to revive its top line growth by concentrating on sales and marketing. Meanwhile, the company is also investing in computer databases to make sure that it is selling a full range of services to all of its customers.

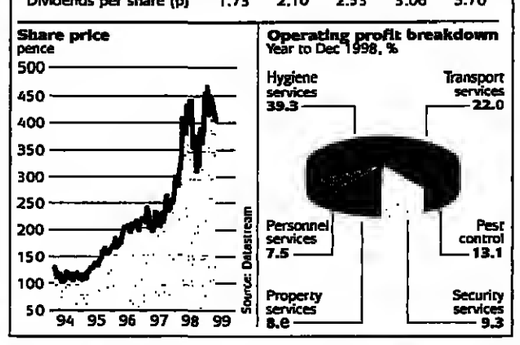
Sir Clive said that if the company could increase its turnover by 11 to 13 per cent a year it would have a good chance of hitting its target by making acquisitions and improving efficiency. "I've never seen a business that can't be improved and I include this business in that," he said. However, he suggested the company was unlikely to make another acquisition in the coming year because prices were too high.

For the time being, the City is taking Sir Clive at his word – brokers are forecasting pre-tax profits of around £585m for the current year, which is an increase of 19 per cent. However, for Rentokil to justify its shares trading on a forward earnings multiple of 28, the company will have to start delivering turnover growth. That looks unlikely for the coming year, making the shares look high enough.

RENTOKIL INITIAL: AT A GLANCE

Market value: £11.5bn. share price 400.75p (-48p)

Trading record	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
Turnover (£)	720.0	857.0	2,270.0	2,812.0	2,878.0
Profit for the year (£m)	177.0	215.0	318.0	417.0	491.0
Earnings per share (p)	5.87	7.11	8.57	10.3	12.0
Dividends per share (p)	1.73	2.10	2.53	3.06	3.70



Gallaher's profits run out of puff

BY NIGEL COPE

GALLAHER, maker of Benson & Hedges and Silk Cut cigarettes, yesterday reported a modest rise in full-year profits, although the figures were hit by currency factors and the flood of bootlegged cigarette imports into its main UK market.

Underlying profits edged up 4.2 per cent to £390m, but higher interest payments cut pre-tax figures from £337m to £318m.

Peter Wilson, chairman and chief executive, said the number of smokers in the UK had risen by half a million due to cheap imports, but the "legitimate" market had fallen by 8 per cent. Bootleg cigarettes led to a 4.7 per cent fall in Gallaher's cigarette sales in the UK, which account for 85 per cent of total sales. Its share of the market slipped from 39.6 per cent to 36 per cent.

This is the Gallaher conundrum; it is heavily reliant on the UK but this market is shrinking. It is trying to expand its international operations, but those too seem to have run out of puff. Germany is difficult, Russian profits have evaporated and France is highly competitive.

Management is right to avoid spreading itself too thinly, but it must be a worry that it has so little presence in the cigarette "hot spots" of the Far East and South America. Managers are looking at "niche" opportunities in the Asia-Pacific region.

On the plus side, UK margins jumped from 42.7 per cent to 46.2 per cent as price rises countered the cheaper rivals and costs were held.

On HSBC current-year forecasts of £335m, the shares – down 2.75p to 447.5p yesterday – trade on a forward multiple of 13, a big discount to the market. HSBC and Charterhouse Tilney, rating the shares at "outperform", believe this will narrow.

PEOPLE AND BUSINESS

BY JOHN WILLCOCK

In the swing at Close Brothers

IT'S A leaner, fitter Sir David Scholey who became Close Brothers' new chairman this week. The former Warburg boss has lost a hefty 50lbs thanks to a diet, say colleagues.

I also learn from the same source that Sir David used to accompany Dusty Springfield on the trumpet. That was in the Sixties, mind you. Sir David, 63, was also an accomplished guitarist and used to hang around louche London clubs playing jazz. Then in 1965 he bumped into Sigmund Warburg at a party and went into merchant banking. The rest is history.

Whether Sir David will now "do a Nigel Lawson" and write a diet book remains to be seen.

The ex-colleague adds that Sir David ran a lucrative roulette game while at Oxford University together with Peter Wilmot-Sitwell, a fellow ex-Warburger and Close Brothers director, and Stuart Wheeler, founder of City betting company IG Index.

All snowed in

JOHN SANDS, chief executive of Pubmaster, is recovering from the shock of being "avalanched in" while skiing in Austria last week.

Or rather, not skiing. "We only got in half a day of skiing out of the whole week. We had to stay in our hotel for Tuesday and Wednesday because of the avalanches," says Mr Sands.

There had been an avalanche at the local railway station at St Anton on the Saturday before Mr Sands's party of "10 guys" arrived. The mayor of St Anton declared a curfew. The result, says the pub boss, was that "we played a lot of chess and drank a lot of beer.

"I now know what house arrest is," he says. "It's the first time I've been grounded since I was 13."

So will the frustrated skiers be seeking refunds? "I don't know. We had a lawyer with us who is looking into it," he says.

Mr Sands is not finished with St Anton, however. "I'm going back next year. I want to ski it. I'm not giving up that easily."

High-flying tax

HEARTWARMING to bear that two parts of DaimlerChrysler will definitely not be merging and not be subject to group criteria on performance and profitability – each company's private airline. Just as well, as Chrysler plans to splash out on a new Airbus later this year.

The Daimler staff are quite happy about the plan. Their tax advisers say the eight hours spent in flight between the offices qualify for the 180 days a year they must spend out of Germany to qualify for a tax break.

Not that Lilley

PETER LILLEY has been at the National Audit Office for 25 years. Yesterday he gave a talk on his experience overseeing the Ministry of Defence's office boldings to a property audience at the Industrial Society.

The first thing Mr Lilley said was: "I'm afraid I'm not the Peter Lilley you might have heard of; my hair's darker and there's less of it."

In contrast to the Tory front bencher, this Peter Lilley has to make sure the MoD looks after its 3 million sqm of office space properly and accounts for running costs of £1bn a year.

Mr Lilley has visited the MoD's operations in Bosnia, flak jacket and all. The people from tectus, the architecture and design firm organising the briefing, were impressed.

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COMPANY RESULTS

Name	Turnover (£)	Pre-tax (£)	EPS	Dividend	Pay day	X-div
Arriva (F)	1.58b (1.42b)	94.5m (101m)	33.5p (36.1p)	14.2p (13.5p)	26 04.99	15 03 99
Brit Aircraft (I)	8.78m (5.94m)	1.96m (1.21m)	4.91p (3.25p)	0.9p (0.7p)	23.04.99	22 03.99
BPP Holdings (F)	88.694m (79.985m)	13.006m (9.041m)	30.7p (17p)	17.25p (16p)	29.04.99	29 03.99
Chalfont Group (F)	12.35m (30.31m)	1.06m (1.72m)	8.50p (13.66p)	4.3p (4.3p)	20.04.99	08 03 99
CRH (F)	EUR 5.034b (4.079b)	408.9m (321.5m)	79.13c (63.79c)	17.14c (14.86c)	–	–
Druid Group (I)	27.834m (14.278m)	4.041m (2.404m)	12.05p (6.97p)	1.6p (1.25p)	23.04.99	22 03.99
Epwin Group (F)	107.99m (90.27m)	6.83m (6.06m)	20.5p (18.2p)	10.3p (9.85p)	05 07.99	01 06 99
Fairview Holdings (F)	187.5m (163.1m)	37.9m (39.5m)	13.8p (14.7p)	2.75p (–)	21.05.99	08.03.99
Fitzwilcs Group (F)	8.91m (5.785m)	0.384m (0.048m)	10.1p (0.3p)	3.3p (3.0p)	05.05.99	08.03.99
Gallaher Group (F)	4.255b (4.414b)	318.6m (337.2m)	– (–)	13.7p (12.85p)	–	–
Hickson International (F)	– (–)	*12.8m (11.1m)	*5.81p (5.78p)	1.8p (1p)	10.05.99	08.03.99
Jardine Lloyd Thompson (F)	232m (225.8m)	58.3m (50.5m)	*20.7p (17.0p)	12p (10.8p)	17.05.99	12.04 99
Jarvis Investment Prop (F)	**10.71m (7.01m)	3.28m (1.66m)	17.29p (6.26p)	7p (6p)	24 05 99	08 03 99
Johnson Fry Holdings (F)	19.35m (21.59m)	-1.2m (-0.266m)	-8.1p (4.5p)	4p (4p)	28 05.99	15 03 99
Millennium & Copthorne Hotels (F)	221.9m (202.6m)	60.4m (50.2m)	30.6p (25.9p)	10.2p (8.8p)	28.04.99	tba
News Communications & Media (I)	70.061m (59.482m)	9.29m (9.85m)	29.53p (29.97p)	6p (6p)	01 04.99	08.03 99
Norwich Union (F)	– (–)	777m (722m)	27.8p (25.2p)	12.8p (11.62p)	16.06.99	19 04 99
Optimist (I)	3.96m (3.78m)	0.227m (0.550m)	1.6p (5.4p)	0.5p (–)	31 03.99	08.03 99
PSD Group (F)	– (–)	13.98m (9.12m)	40.8p (26p)	12.8p (–)	14 04.99	08 03.99
Rentokil Initial (F)	2.874b (2.874b)	490.6m (417m)	12.22p (10.32p)	3.70p (3.06p)	14.05.99	12.04 99
RJB Mining (F)	922.54m (1.125b)	40.06m (171.08m)	36.6p (78.3p)	7p (20p)	24 05 99	19.04 99
United Industries (F)	58.967m (37.869m)	0.850m (3.646m)	1.35p (6.93p)	2.90p (2.80p)	15.07.99	01.06 99

(F) - Final (I) - Interim * Pre-exceptional ** Including Joint Ventures

LIFFE FINANCIAL FUTURES

Contract		Settlement	High	Low	Est floor volume	Open interest
Long Gilt	Mar-99	115.73	115.95	115.35	3360.00	15286 00
5 Yr Gilt	Mar-99	108.16	..	..	...	63.00
German Bond	Mar-99	113.90	..	..	..	...
Italian Bond	Mar-99	112 25	112 32	111.85	25047 00	36727.00
Japan Govt Bd	Mar-99	132 03	132.18	131.80	3885.00	...
3 Mth Sterling	Mar-99	94 66	94 67	94.60	38673.00	179709.00
	Jun-99	94.87	94.88	94 75	66287.00	193481 00
3 Mth Euribor	Mar-99	96.89	96.90	96.88	33979.00	165378 00
	Apr-99	96 93	..	..	.	6458.00
	Jun-99	96.94	96.96	96 92	57521.00	144160 00
3 Mth Euroyen	Mar-99	99 69	..	..	...	...
3 Mth Euroswiss	Mar-99	98.58	98 63	98.58	14900.00	73812.00
	Apr-99	98.48	98 56	98 47	28880.00	80301.00
3 Mth Euro Libor	Mar-99	96.89	96.89	96.88	675.00	119228.00
	Apr-99	96 93	..	..	..	...
	Jun-99	96 94	96.95	96 92	1802.00	107246.00
FTSE 100	Mar-99	6062.00	6132 00	6033 00	28658.00	163951.00

LIFFE FTSE 100 INDEX OPTION

Underlying Price 6061 30

Strike	Mar Call	Mar Imp Vol	Mar Put	Mar Imp Vol	Apr Call	Apr Put	May Call	May Put	Jun Call	Jun Put
5900	76	26	2 33	27	181	310	267	388	328	431
5950	55	26	2 54	27	159	339	244	412	-1	-1
6000	41	25	2 91	27	137	369	222	442	284	486
6050	26	25	3 28	27	114	398	200	471	-1	-1

ENERGY AT 5.30PM

Brent Crude($/barrel)	IPE	Last*	Chg	Vol	WTI Crude($/barrel)	NYM	Last*	Chg	Products($/tonne)	Spot CIF NW Eur
	Apr	10.89	0.17	13374		Mar	11 96	-	Gasoline 95	114 00
	May	11.08	0 17	9707		Apr	12 47	0 22	Naphtha	101 00
	Jun	11.25	0 17	2639		May	12 60	0.20	Gasoil	101 00
						Jun	12 72	0.15	Fuel Oil (3 5%)	57 00

GOLDMAN SACHS COMMODITY INDICES AT 5.30PM

	BASE DATE	LAST	CHG	%CHG	31 DEC	%CHGYTD
Index	1970=100	132 31	1 19	0.91	215.26	-38.53
Agricultural	1970=100	167 99	1.92	1.16	231.23	-27.35
Energy	1983=100	44 12	0 57	1 31	85.86	-48.61
Ind Metals	1977=100	175 75	0 00	0 00	168.79	-25.50
Livestock	1970=100	163 34	-0 19	-0.12	191.03	-14.50
Prec Metals	1973=100	385.56	1 15	0.30	463.54	-16.82

FOREIGN EXCHANGE RATES

Country	Sterling Spot	1 month	3 month	Dollar Spot	1 month	3 month	Euro
UK	1.0000			0.6198	0.6201	0.6203	0.6776
Australia	2 6016	2.6008	2.6002	1 6125	1 6126	1.6128	1.7630
Austria	20.319	20.306	20.293	12.593	12.591	12.587	13.7603
Belgium	59 567	59 446	59.241	36.918	36.860	36.745	40.340
Canada	2 4524	2 4516	2.4508	1.5199	1 5201	1.5202	1.6617
Denmark	10.922	10 955	10.921	6.8004	6.7915	6.7741	7.4349
Euro	1.4758	1 7658	1 7712	0.9147	0.9133	0.9102	1.0000
Finland	8.7796	8 7618	8.7315	5.4413	5.4328	5.4158	5.9457
France	9 686	9.666	9.633	6.0031	5.9937	5.9750	6.5596
Germany	2.8880	2.8870	2 8722	1.7899	1.7870	1.7815	1.9558
Greece	475.76	477.05	480 37	294 55	295.79	297.92	322.03
Hong Kong	12 501	12.501	12.520	7 7480	7.7514	7.7660	8.4709
Ireland	1.1629	1.1606	1 1566	0 7207	1.3896	1.3940	0.7876
Italy	2850 1	2853 4	2843.5	1772.0	1769.2	1763.7	1936.27
Japan	194 28	193 38	191.78	120.41	119.91	118.96	131.644
Malaysia	6 1313	6.1917	6.2879	3.8000	3.8392	3.9002	4.1545
Mexico	16.056			9 9500			10.8783
Netherlands	3 2540	3.2473	3 2362	2.0168	2.0135	2.0073	2.2037
New Zealand	3 0553	3.0543	3.0540	1.8948	1.8938	1.8943	2.0703
Norway	12.768	12 794	12.830	7.9135	7.9332	7.9580	8.6518
Portugal	296 04	295 44	294.41	183 47	183.19	182.62	200.48
Saudi Arabia	6 0513	6 0639	6 0835	3 7504	3.7599	3.7734	4.1003
Singapore	2 7973	2 7899	2.7761	1 7337	1.7299	1.7219	1.8955
South Africa	11 0723	10.1685	10.3137	6.2425	6.3050	6.3972	6.8249
Spain	245 69	245.17	244 34	152.27	152 02	151.56	166.386
Sweden	13 290	13 265	13.223	8 2370	8.2247	8.2016	9.0055
Switzerland	2.3543	2 3455	2.3308	1.4591	1.4543	1.4457	1.5952
US	1.6135			1 0000			0.9147

OTHER SPOT RATES

Country	Sterling	Dollar	Country	Sterling	Dollar
Argentina	1 6135	1.0000	Oman	0 6212	0.3850
Brazil	3 4490	2 1500	Pakistan	82.627	51.210
China	13.358	8 2789	Philippines	63.007	39.050
Czech Rep	55 545	34 425	Poland	6 4056	3.9700
Egypt	5 5162	3.4188	Qatar	5 8723	3.6395
Ghana	3815 9	2365 0	Russia	37304.1	23120.0
Hungary	372 57	230 91	South Korea	1974.9	1224.00
India	68 541	42 480	Taiwan	53.221	32.985
Indonesia	14319 8	8875 0	Thailand	60 264	37.350
Kuwait	0 4916	0.3047	Turkey	574955	356340
Nigeria	140 71	87 200	UAE	5.9765	3.7041

INDUSTRIAL METALS

LME ($/tonne)	Cash		Chg	3 month		Chg	LME stocks	Chgs
Aluminium HG	1147	1148	-11.50	1169	1170	-9.5	813050	350
Aluminium Alloy	998	1003	-10.00	1025	1027	-11	87180	-680
Copper A	1370.5	1371.5	5.50	1396.5	1397	5	695525	-175
Lead	514.5	515.5	-3.50	514.5	515.5	-0.5	107725	-100
Nickel	4855	4865	30.00	4920	4925	30	60492	12
Tin	5415	5420	20.00	5345	5350	20	8795	485
Zinc	1055	1056	11.00	1062.5	1063.5	17.5	311075	-500

PRECIOUS METALS

pm fix/$ per oz		Day's chg	Year's chg	pm fix/£ per oz		Day's chg	Year's chg	Coins ($)		Year's chg
Platinum	376.00	-3.50	-12.00	Platinum	232.90	-3.25	-2.25	Krug'rands	289.21	-0.02
Palladium	350.00	-1.00	115.50	Palladium	216.80	-1.60	74.70	Sovs	71.90	
Silver	5.49	-0.13	-1.12	Silver	3.41	-0.09	-0.59	Nobles	386.05	
Gold	288.25	1.55	-10.10					Maple Leaf	292.35	-14.90

AGRICULTURAL AT 5.30PM

Cocoa		Coffee		Barley		Potatoes		Soya Beans*	
LIFFE £/tonne		LIFFE $/tonne		LIFFE £/tonne		LIFFE £/tonne		CBOT $/bk	
Mar99	875.00	Mar99	1795.00	Mar99	74.25	Apr99	276.00	Apr99	458.50
May99	862.00	May99	1613.00	May99	73.75	May99	333.00	May99	467.50
Jul99	883.00	Jul99	1590.00	Sep99	73.75	Jun99	343.00	Jun99	475.50
Vol:	650	Vol:	1207	Vol:	---	Vol:	---	Vol:	8033
White Sugar*		Freight		Wheat		Corn*		Lge Potatoes	
LIFFE $/tonne		LIFFE $10/dx pt		LIFFE £/tonne		CBOT Cents/bshl		ATA $/25k kg	
May99	212.50	Mar99	970.00	Mar99	72.00	Mar99	209.75	Mar99	13.70
Aug99	204.40	Apr99	985.00	May99	74.25	May99	215.00	May99	32.00
Oct99	198.00	May99	950.00	Jul99	75.40	Jul99	221.50	Jul99	32.60
Vol:	464	Vol:	2	Vol:	10	Vol:	9612	Vol:	119

OTHER SPOTS AT 5.30PM

Apr	Live Cattle	(CME) $/40k lb	68.15	Mar	White Maize	(SAF) $/100 mt	870.00
Mar	Pork Bellies	(CME) $/40k lb	48.05	Aug	Rubber	(TCM) Y/ 5k kg	82.40
May	Orange Juice	(CTN) $/15k lb	84.20	May	Cotton	(CTN) $/50k lb	59.30
Dec	Milk	(CSC) $/50k lb	...	Mar	Crude Palm	(KLC) $/25 mt	1650.00
May	Oats	(CBT) $/5k bsh	106.00	May	Soya Oil	(CBT) $/60k lb	18.33
May	Flax	(WCE) $/20 mt	277.00	Jul	Woollen Yarn	(TCM) $/500kg	1165.00

INTEREST RATES

UK		Discount	5.25%	Repo(Ave)	3.15%
Base	5.50%	Denmark		Japan	
European Central Bank		Discount	3.25%	Discount	0.50%
O/N Marginal	4.50%	US		Switzerland	
O/N Facility	2.00%	Prime	7.75%	Discount	1.00%
Repo	3.00%	Discount	4.50%	Lombard	3.25%
Canada		Fed Funds	4.81%		
Prime	6.75%	Sweden			

BOND YIELDS

Country	3 mth	chg	1 yr	chg	2 yr	chg	5 yr	chg	10 yr	chg
Australia	4.73	-0.05	4.67	-0.09	4.93	-0.06	5.25	-0.03	5.56	-0.06
Belgium	2.98	0.00	2.92	0.00	3.29	-0.01	3.83	0.03	4.33	0.03
Canada	4.98	0.04	5.20	-0.03	5.28	-0.05	5.34	-0.08	5.36	-0.07
Euro	3.12	0.02	3.15	0 07	3.21	-0.01	3.58	-0.03	4.07	-0.01
France	3.12	0.02	3.04	0.16	3.20	0.01	3.62	-0.03	4.19	-0.02
Germany	3.12	0.02	3.15	0.07	3.22	0.00	3.48	-0.02	4.08	-0.03
Italy	2.92	0.00	3.05	0.00	3.30	0.01	3.78	-0.04	4.32	0.00
Japan	0.13	-0.01	0.16	-0.01	0.31	-0.01	1.01	-0.02	1.88	-0.03
N'lands	3.12	0.02	3.15	0.07	3.25	0.01	3.66	-0.01	4.18	-0.01
Spain	3.02	0.00	3.02	-0.01	3.16	-0.02	3.73	-0.02	4.33	-0.03
Sweden	3.20	-0.01	3.31	0.00	3.40	-0.01	3.83	-0.02	4.47	-0.05
S'land	1.38	0.10	1.58	0.11	1.55	-0.01	1.95	0.02	2.45	0.01
UK	5.06	-0.02	5.39	0.03	5.01	-0.03	4.70	-0.04	4.61	-0.01
US	4.49	0.20	4.58	0.30	5.13	0.07	5.23	0.08	5.32	0.07

MONEY MARKET RATES

	Overnight Bid	Overnight Offer	1 week Bid	1 week Offer	1 month Bid	1 month Offer	3 months Bid	3 months Offer	6 months Bid	6 months Offer	1 year Bid	1 year Offer
Treasury Bills					5.28	5.18	5.16	5.06				
LIBOR			5.57	5.57	5.56	5 56	5.44	5.44	5.38	5.38	5.395	5.39
Domestic Depos	5.44	5.56	5.38	5.50	5.44	5.50	5.25	5.38	5.31	5.25	5.315	5.38
Eurosterling Deps	5.69	5.81	5.00	5.63	5 47	5.53	5.31	5.38	5.25	5.31	5.315	5.38
Eligible Bank Bills					5.38	5.28	5.23	5.13	5 05	4.95	-	-
Sterling CDs					5.46	5.38	5.33	5.25	5.26	5.18	5.255	5.17
Eurodollar CDs					4.84		4.90		5.01			
Euro Libor			3.13	3.13	3 13	3.13	3.12	3.12	3.10	3.10	3.153	3.15

www.bloomberg.com/uk Source: Bloomberg

SPORT

'We have a chance. A slightly outside chance but better than last year. I will know very early on whether the car is good enough'

Hill driven on by quest for true respect

THE BRIAN VINER INTERVIEW

HAVE YOU ever wondered why Formula One drivers are so keen to get soaked in champagne on the winners' podium? I haven't, until something Damon Hill says gives me pause for thought. We are talking about his preparation before a race. "I take in lots of fluid," he says. "You have to counter the fact that you are wearing thick flameproof overalls in the car, so lose hardly any of your body heat. It's like doing a half-marathon, wearing a woolly hat and thermal underwear, on a hot day. So you drink mineral drinks and carbohydrate drinks, and are quite literally bursting for a pee by the time you get to the car. That's why you see drivers jumping over the wall at the start of a race. Actually, I think it sharpens you up, and it's why everyone races off to the first corner, though it usually seems to disappear after the first lap."

There's no avoiding the $64,000 question. Has he ever given vent to his need, as it were, during a race? We both laugh. "I know drivers who do," he says. "I couldn't do that, I just couldn't. But it's actually quite common." So there we are. There is clearly an unwritten rule among drivers that they will soak each other in champagne to conceal those embarrassing wet patches.

The real $64,000 question, of course, is whether Hill will make it to the podium this season? Last year, he confounded both his own critics and those who thought that a grand prix was beyond the Jordan team, by winning in Belgium. Can he do it again? And if so, is he in with a serious shout of winning the championship, which gets off the grid in Melbourne on Sunday? "I think we have a chance," he says, guardedly. "A slightly outside chance but a better chance than last year. I will know very early on whether the car is good enough."

We are at Brackley, near Silverstone, where the new car has been rigorously tested against simulated race conditions in the Jordan wind tunnel. It is early morning. Hill has stayed overnight at the Oxford home of the team's charismatic owner, Eddie Jordan. He looks sleek and fit and raring to go. At 38, he is the oldest Formula One driver by far, and is acutely conscious of the fact. Everyone keeps asking when he will retire to his large home in Dublin to enjoy, with his wife and four children, a fortune reputed to be well over £30m. "At the moment, I still feel I have something to prove," he says.

There is no doubt that, to coin a pun, he is a driven man. One theory goes that Hill has long been motivated by the desire to restore the family fortune, which disintegrated after his father, Graham, died in a plane crash in 1975. It turned out that Graham Hill had forgotten to renew his pilot's licence and was therefore uninsured.

But Hill is rich enough now to have bought his own plane – a Lear jet, which he proudly tells me flies at .8 of the speed of sound – so clearly there is something driving him beyond the desire for material reward. Perhaps it is simply that he craves more respect from his peers. For despite his world championship in 1996, there are some in the sport who disrespectfully claim that Hill is a seriously flawed driver.

It is said, for instance, that he is poor at overtaking. Is he? "There have been occasions when I've been less than committed, which has got me into trouble," he admits. For a moment, it seems as if I am going to get a show of humility. But champions as single-minded as Hill, in sports as demanding as motor racing, don't really do humility.

"I overtook Schumacher on the first corner in Hungary, which is supposed to be almost impossible to overtake on," he adds. "I took Frentzen up the inside on the grass in my last race at Suzuka. I have been through the field from the back to the front at Estoril. I think my driving ability can equal that of anyone out there, and I have other talents. I think I am very good at working with the team and getting the best out of the car. A lot of drivers don't have that strength."

'Everyone wants to see a punch-up, but starts tutting when there is one. Lighten up... It's entertainment'

Unusually, if not uniquely in the modern era, Hill did not race in Formula One until he was well past 30. He had started racing motorbikes in 1979, a hobby he financed by working as a dispatch rider in London. When he did finally graduate to Formula One, with Williams-Renault, he won three races in his first full season. Yet he did not come of age as a driver, he feels, until the following year, 1994, when he won the Japanese Grand Prix at Suzuka. "I drove out of my skin in that race," he recalls. "For me it marked a new threshold in Formula One and I think it was similar for Hakkinen at Nürburgring last year. He drove in a way he hadn't before, better than he ever thought he could drive."

Last year, Hill watched with detached amusement as the media stoked up the rivalry between Mika Hakkinen and the man everyone wants to beat, sometimes in more ways than one, Michael Schumacher. "It always comes down to two protagonists," he says. "Michael and me, Senna and Prost, Senna and Mansell. In a sense it is very similar to boxing, with all the hype and attempts to out-psyche each other. When you have two people of equal ability, a psychological advantage can make the difference. Muhammad Ali was a great one for that. By the time he got in the ring he had often reduced his opponent to an incidental, a side-show. And I really don't see any negatives about that. In fact, I think it could go a lot further. The trouble is, there is this dual standard. Everyone wants to see a punch-up, but starts tutting when there is one. Why doesn't everyone lighten up? It's entertainment."

As he would perhaps acknowledge, Hill has himself been known to forget that he works in a branch of the entertainment industry, a charge never levelled at his flamboyant father. He is uneasy talking about his father, and understandably loathes the cod-psychology which has him trying to match the old man's record. Warily, though, he admits that it would be nice to emulate Hill Snr by winning two world championships.

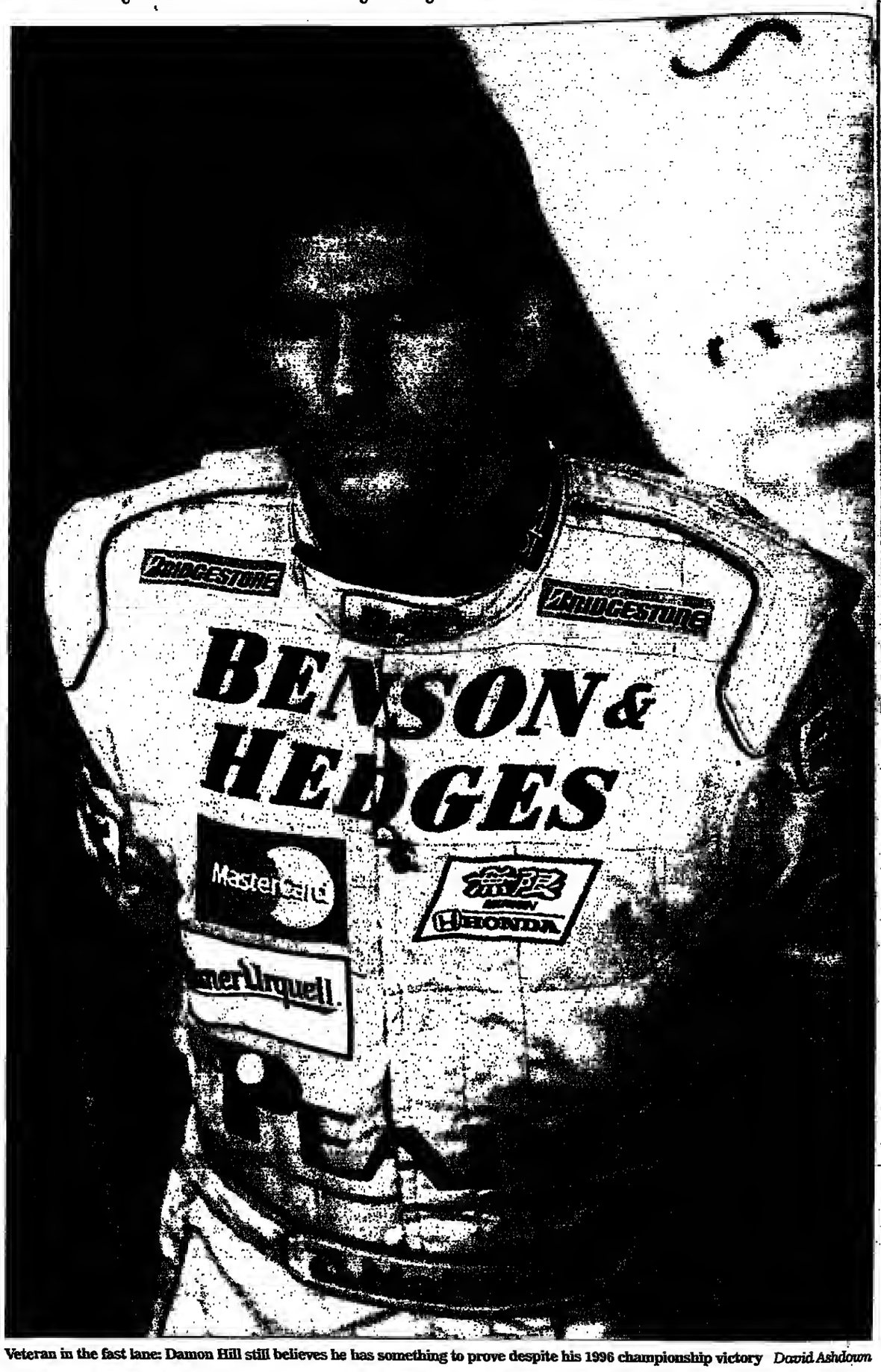
"He died such a long time ago, though. It will be 25 years at the end of next year. But that's not to say that I don't think about him. And although I'm not like Glenn Hoddle, I am comforted by the feeling that he's aware of everything I've done." There are, of course, people still around in motor racing who loomed large in Hill's childhood. "I remember my dad being on the phone to Bernie Ecclestone a lot," he says. Were they friends? He searches for the right words. "I think," he says, "that any relationship with Bernie is bound to lead to some level of frustration."

If he has had a proxy father, it has been Jackie Stewart. "He has always treated me brilliantly, and I have asked him for advice a few times, though of course he runs a rival team. Jackie knows all there is to know about driving. When you listen to what he has to say, to what Fangio says, to Stirling Moss, their words are as meaningful as anyone's. And when you look back at the things they did not even that long ago, you think, Christ! Look at those aluminium chassis, ground-effect cars, with the driver sitting practically on the front axle – in an impact there was nothing there. But at the time, they thought they were driving the safest cars possible."

Hill is keenly aware of the essential contradiction in motor racing, that it is presented as a family spectacle, yet its most dramatic moments involve crashes and, sometimes, fatalities. "Imola in 1994 knocked the stuffing out of everyone," he says, referring to the deaths of Ayrton Senna and Roland Ratzenberger. "Since then, the sport has been made safer and the risk element has been reduced. But you can go too far down the road of sanitising everything. We are not human beings unless we take risks. Or put it this way, the lives of people who take no risks would be even duller if there weren't people who take risks on their behalf."

Hill has always been a risk-taker. He was just five when he was introduced to skiing, and was instantly intoxicated by the speed of it. Even now, he insists that skiing is his first sporting love, and his eight-year-old son Joshua is similarly smitten. He is also determined to master surfing, and last year in Australia spent three whole days in the surf. "I relax by doing something else intensely," he says. "The trouble is that I end up doing everything in bites." Not to mention bytes! He is presently trying to absorb information technology. "I hate Bill Gates, actually hate him," he says. "I have very little time to get up to speed with computers, so when I do, I want to be able to plug in and go. But you can't, because there is barrier upon barrier. Gates is walking into the sunset with billions, having sold us a dream that's not yet there. We're told it makes life easier. It doesn't, it makes life hell."

There rants a man who cannot abide to be defeated by a machine. And it raises the question, what will he do when he does finally hang up his racing overalls? "Motor-racing has been part of my life for as long as I can remember," he says. "I think I would like to do something else next, because it is quite a claustrophobic world, with limited opportunities. If I did stay involved, I would want control over the entire sport and everyone in it. And then I would give the public passes to get into the paddock, because the hospitality business is keeping true fans further and further away. It is the same with football. But I think we might be on the cusp of realising that money is not the answer to everything." If only it were so.



Veteran in the fast lane: Damon Hill still believes he has something to prove despite his 1996 championship victory *David Ashdown*

TOMORROW
Complete guide to the Formula One season

SPORTS LETTERS

Post letters to Sports Desk at 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL and include a daytime telephone number. Faxes to 0171 293 2894 or e-mail to sport@independent.co.uk E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity

Ferguson shares blame for 'greed'

Sir: It is hypocritical of Alex Ferguson to be suddenly concerned about players' salaries and the future of football (*Sport*, 26 February) since he and his club are as much to blame as anyone for the current situation.

When clubs pay inflated fees for average players, British and foreign – and there are many examples of both currently in the Premiership – it is natural for those players to seek salaries that reflect their valuation.

There is a culture of greed prevalent at the top level of English football which needs to be eradicated. But clubs and players must all play their part in achieving this; not simply turn a blind eye and expect the fans to keep paying more and more at the turnstiles.

Perhaps a cap on transfer fees, and salaries linked to that fee, would bring some sanity and common sense back to our national game, ensuring its future for another hundred years.
M P FARISS
Castle Douglas, Kirkcudbrightshire

Fifa 'not fair'

Sir: Should Fifa, football's world governing body, have left English football in such disrepute following the FA Cup replay between Arsenal and Sheffield United? This unfortunate matter was being dealt with, albeit controversially, by the English Football Association in a pressurised yet sportsmanlike manner.

So, why did Fifa have to get involved? Their original plan seems to have been to stop a rematch taking place and letting the result stand. If this was allowed to happen and Arsenal had been allowed through to the next round of the Cup, then I would like to know exactly what Fifa's policy of "Fair Play" is.
JONATHAN MONTANARO
Leamington Spa, Warwickshire

No returns

Sir: In light of the recent drama made out of the Arsenal v Sheffield United game, I must share with you an event that I had totally forgotten about which I saw in a football programme last night. I quote: "Manchester United, the best team in the land, desperately going for the championship, are being urged on by captain Steve Bruce. Unfancied Chelsea, in our first season under the management of Glenn Hoddle, are 1-0 up at Old Trafford. Mark Stein suffers a bad ankle injury and gets carried off. There are only a handful of minutes left. Chelsea have kicked the ball out so that Stein can be treated. United take the throw-in to re-start and fail to give it back to Chelsea. They want that title so much. Chelsea fans boo in disgust." It is 1994. Chelsea win 1-0, United win the title. I wonder whatever happened to Steve Bruce?
M ADAMSON
London SW11

Shirt shrift

Sir: Now it has been brought to general notice that there is such a thing as "gentlemanly conduct" in association football, can we expect to see it now applied to the widespread practice of shirt-pulling which seems to be largely ignored by referees?
MORGAN JONES
Lyme Regis, Dorset

Poor puns

Sir: I am fed up with hearing television football pundits (particularly, it seems, Scottish ones) talking interminably about "the back of the net." When a shot hits the side netting, it has missed. When a goalie tips a lob on to the top of the net, he's saved it. So it seems to follow that the aim of the striker should not be to hit the "back of the net".

Let them stick it instead in the back of the goal, or hit the front of the net. Or better, just stick it in the net, nice and simple; football's a simple game, after all. Let's consign this unlovely phrase to the bin of history where it belongs, along with Frank McLintock's classic "the boy Lineker done good".
ALAN SMITH
Heaton Moor, Stockport

Bemoaning Seles

Sir: When playing golf, the late Douglas Bader used to squeakingly adjust one of his knee joints just as his opponent was about to play his tee shot. I consider the squawk Monica Seles makes every time she plays a stroke to be grossly offputting to her opponent and believe the umpire should warn her to stop it or be disqualified.
CANON PAUL GODDARD
Polruan, Cornwall

Odds against

Sir: I thoroughly enjoyed Ken Jones' article on the British challenge for the world heavyweight title (27 February).

But could someone please tell me what Lennox Lewis has done to justify being made favourite to defeat Evander Holyfield on 13 March? Lest we forget, Lewis was on his way to defeat against Frank Bruno until he (like so many others) managed to render Bruno senseless with one punch. Holyfield is the real deal.
GERARD HUNT
Hemel Hempstead

Life is tougher in Baulch's fun zone

The pin-up boy of British athletics supplements his teen-dream image with a new-found determination. By Mike Rowbottom

THEY USED to scream for Roger Black. Now they scream for Jamie Baulch. Wacky hair, cheeky grin, little legs going nineteen to the dozen. Cute.

The object of so much teen and pre-teen affection would be the perfect signing for Gazza's agent, Mel Stein, who has moved into athletics recently by taking on young talents such as sprinter, Jason Gardener, and heart-throb high jumper, Ben Challenger.

But Baulch is already spoken for – a member of the Nuff Respect agency jointly set up by Colin Jackson and Linford Christie and a fully paid up member of Team Linford, the training group directed by the former Olympic 100 metres champion.

Baulch has referred to Christie as "the big daddy coach", and, like the newly established European 100m champion Darren Campbell, he has benefited from the paternalistic approach of one of Britain's greatest athletes.

What Baulch is attempting to do now is to come fully of age as he seeks his first big individual title at his specialist distance of 400 metres. Starting on Friday, at the IAAD World Indoor Championships in Maebashi, Japan, he seeks to improve upon the silver medal he won two years ago in Paris.

At the age of 25, Baulch is still trying to achieve the level of consistency which has established his Welsh colleague, old rival and near-contemporary Iwan Thomas as Britain's No 1 400m runner.

So far this season his indoor record could not have been better – four consecutive wins on the European circuit, including one over the man who beat him to gold in Paris, Sunday Bada of Nigeria.

"I feel totally differently about these championships," he said. "Two years ago I had raced a lot more beforehand and I felt people were putting pressure on me to win. This year I am a lot more relaxed and ready to enjoy myself."

Enjoyment is something Baulch always manages to communicate when he appears on or around a track. It is a crucial part of what he does.

"A lot of athletes at this level make everything seem so serious," he explains. "At the end of the day, they have all started in the sport because they love running or jumping or throwing. But once they get good at it they forget that. It is so important to have fun."

The most obvious manifestation of this personal priority is Baulch's hair, which, in the space of the last five years has been bleached and styled relentlessly. His most dramatic effort was what appeared to be a tribute to "Wildman" Keith Flint – as the tabloids prefer to call him – lead singer with Prodigy. But Baulch knew nothing about old Firestarter before he had his hair done at Junior's salon in Newport. He just fancied the look.

"I always like to come out with a new style. Short back and sides ain't for me," he said. His current tonsorial arrangement is a two-tone, brown and blond affair – "Quite boring, actually." Junior can expect another visit soon.

The fun factor also evidenced itself in *Energize*, a Saturday morning ITV programme Baulch hosted, which featured a range of "extreme" sports including waterskiing, quad biking, go-karting and, according to Baulch, "general craziness". He adds blithely: "I do it all. There's nothing really dangerous."

Black did not allow himself even to ski or play tennis until he retired for fear of injury. Baulch's approach is more rumbustious – what you might expect, in fact, from a former schoolboy trampoline champion.

His performance at last September's Commonwealth Games, where he laughed and joked with Thomas as both qualified easily for the final, appeared to be another classic example of Baulch's light-hearted approach.

But the joking masked a new-found determination for a runner whose season had been undermined by injury and then a debilitating virus which left as mysteriously as it had arrived. Baulch was forced to miss last February's European indoor championships, and although he ran the AAA trials in July, he ended up in tears after failing to gain an individual place for the European Championships.

'I was almost scared by the roar when my name was announced. A couple of years ago it would only have been my parents clapping. I went weak at the knees, to be honest'

It was his worst year as a competitor – and it brought home to him the precarious nature of his calling. "Athletics is a very harsh world," he said. "I watched the European indoors on television, and there was not one mention of me when they showed the 400m, even though I had been second in the world the year before.

"People forget you very easily. But things like that inspire me. I thought, 'OK, if people want to choose to forget me I'll make people remember again quickly.'"

Being in the relay team, he acknowledges, helped him through a difficult year as he added gold medals in the European Cup and European Championship to the silver he had taken with Black, Thomas and Mark Richardson at the Atlanta Olympics – the highlight of his career thus far.

But he was aware of the need to re-establish himself in the public eye, if nothing else, before the season's end. "By the time the Commonwealths came around, I almost felt I had to prove myself," he said.

A sub-45 second time as he had a lark with Thomas indicated his true quality as a one lap runner, although disappointment lay ahead in the final, where he missed out on a medal as his disrupted preparations finally told on him.

Overall, however, he was satisfied that he had made an impact. "I was pleased to have performed well even though I was less than 100 per cent fit," he said.

Baulch will be the only one from Christie's training group who will travel over from their current training base in Australia to compete in the world indoors. He believes his journey will not be in vain.

His winning time at the Bupa grand prix in Birmingham earlier this month, on the eve of his departure Down Under, was 45.60sec – not so far away from his 1997 personal best of 45.39. But he derived at least as much encouragement from the reaction of the 8,500 sell-out crowd.

"I was almost scared by the roar when my name was announced," he said. "A couple of years ago it would only have been my parents clapping. I went weak at the knees, to be honest."

The feeling, in many cases, is mutual. Rejoice! British athletics' love object is back in the running!

Jamie Baulch is chasing first major individual title in the 400m in Japan *Empics*

Italians on top in Cup trial

SAILING

BY JOHN ROBERSON
in Auckland

ITALY'S PRADA Team, skippered by Francesco de Angelis, were unbeaten on the first day of an America's Cup trial regatta in Auckland yesterday. Prada, the best-funded America's Cup challengers, have spent more time in Auckland practising than any other crew seeking to take on the defending champions, New Zealand.

The Italians set up camp here for three months last year and five months this summer.

The French Le Defi crew, skippered by Bertrand Pace, ended the first day of the Road to the America's Cup with one win and one loss, while the San Francisco-based America True team failed to score. America True appear to be suffering from the loss of the world No 2 match race skipper, Gavin Brady, who resigned from their challenge a week ago.

The event is being held a year before the America's Cup as a trial run for many of the organisations involved in the real Cup regatta, being sailed in two identical boats provided by the Team New Zealand defence syndicate. The winners of the four-day challenger series face the New Zealanders at the weekend.

The three crews had a tough day in brisk conditions on Auckland's Waitemata Harbour, with shifing winds of 18 to 23 knots out of the south west towards the upper limit of conditions these delicate boats can handle.

In the last race of the day a broken boom cost the French boat their chance of victory over the Italians, though the Prada crew did have the upper hand at the time of the breakage. De Angelis is the lowest-ranked skipper here in the world match race rankings but his months of training in America's Cup class boats has taught him how to get the best speed out of them.

■ Giovanni Soldini was yesterday poised to take the lead in the 50,000 kilometre Around Alone race, despite stopping to rescue a fellow competitor.

Sheepish Allott bats his way to record duck

CRICKET

BY STEVEN MARSDEN
in Christchurch

South Africa 621-5 dec
New Zealand 352 & 4-0

THE NEW ZEALAND tail-ender, Geoff Allott, broke the world record for the longest innings without scoring a run yesterday when he faced 77 balls before being out for a duck against South Africa in Auckland.

Allott survived 101 minutes to break the record of England's Godfrey Evans, who took 97 minutes to score his first run against Australia in Adelaide in 1946. Allott, however, had not scored when he was caught at slip by Shaun Pollock off Jacques Kallis.

Allott – who has more wickets than runs in his first-class career, 86 to 83 – came to the crease with his side on 320 for 9, still 102 runs short of the follow-on target after the tourists had amassed 621 for 5 declared in the first Test at Eden Park.

"It was probably the best duck I'll ever score," he said afterwards. "I had no idea of the record until the public address announcer said that I'd broken the New Zealand record." That was held by John Wright, who took 66 minutes to open his account against Australia in Wellington in 1981-82.

Asked whether he was afraid he might edge a four through the slips on the way towards the world record, Allott scoffed at suggestions he was aiming for the mark.

"A tail-ender is never afraid of getting runs – in fact, if Harry [Chris Harris] hadn't turned down about five easy singles then I might never have got anywhere near it," Allott said after the fourth's day play.

He did, however, enter into the spirit of the unusual occasion by raising his bat to all corners of the ground, and smiling broadly, as a small but enthusiastic crowd cheered every dot ball as he neared, and then broke, one of the game's least sought-after batting records.

"Even the South Africans were smiling," said a sheepish Allott. "You've got to see the funny side."

The day had begun perfectly for South Africa's bowlers who claimed two wickets in the first two overs to reduce the home side from their overnight 205 for 2 to 210 for 4.

Craig McMillan chased a wide delivery from Hansie Cronje and edged a catch to wicketkeeper Mark Boucher to depart for 25 to the sixth ball of the day, which left the middle order exposed to the new ball, due six overs into the day.

The second over was bowled by spinner Paul Adams and Matthew Horne made the mistake of playing back to the fifth ball, a rapid top-spinner which kept low and passed between bat and pad to bowl the opener for 93. He faced 225 balls and struck 13 fours.

Adam Parore, forced to postpone a court appearance for reckless driving in order to play on the fourth day, made nine runs from 54 balls before playing a ball from Pollock onto his stumps.

Lance Klusener removed Matthew Bell (6) and Dion Nash (1) in successive overs after tea as the home slipped again from 237 for 5 to 251 for 7.

Daniel Vettori dominated an eighth-wicket stand of 43 with Harris before top-edging a sweep against Adams to Cronje at mid-on. He made a bright 32 from 74 balls with five boundaries. Only one over was possible in New Zealand's second innings after Allott was finally dismissed and Matthew Horne scored all four of New Zealand's runs as they reduced the total deficit to 265.

Fourth day: New Zealand won the toss

SOUTH AFRICA – First Innings 621-5 dec (D J Cullinan 275no, G Kirsten 128).

NEW ZEALAND – First Innings
(Overnight: 205 for 2)

M J Horne b Adams	93
C D McMillan c Boucher b Donald	25
C Z Harris not out	68
†A C Parore b Pollock	9
M D Bell b Klusener	6
*D J Nash c Boucher b Klusener	1
D L Vettori c Cronje b Adams	32
S B Doull c Gibbs b Adams	17
G I Allott c Pollock b Kallis	0
Extras (21lb, 2w, 6nb)	29
Total (160.4 overs)	352

Fall (cont): 3-210, 4-210, 5-224, 6-241, 7-251, 8-288, 9-320.

Bowling: Donald 27-16-40-2; Pollock 28-11-51-1; Klusener 27-7-60-2; Adams 46-18-103-3; Kallis 21.4-10-44-1; Cullinan 2-0-8-0; Cronje 9-2-25-1.

NEW ZEALAND – Second Innings

M J Horne not out	4
M D Bell not out	0
Total (for 0, 1 over)	4

To bat: N J Astle, C D McMillan, C Z Harris, †A C Parore, R G Twose, *D J Nash, D L Vettori, S B Doull, G I Allott.

Bowling: Kallis 1-0-4-0

Umpires: D B Cowie and D J Harper (Aus).

WORLD'S SLOWEST STARTERS

Minutes on nought

101	Geoff Allott New Zealand v S Africa, Eden Park, 1999
97	T G Evans England v Australia, Adelaide, 1946-47
84	R K Chauhan India v Sri Lanka, Ahmedabad, 1993-94
82	P J Pocock England v W Indies, Georgetown, 1967-68
74	J T Murray England v Australia, Sydney, 1962-63
72	C G Rackemann Australia v England, Sydney, 1990-91
72	H H Streak Zimbabwe v Pakistan, Karachi, 1993-94
70	W L Murdock Australia v England, Sydney, 1882-83
69	R M Hogg Australia v W Indies, Adelaide, 1984-85
67	C J Tavaré England v Pakistan, Lord's, 1982 (Tavaré went on to make 82.)

Allott 'celebrates' his world record duck *AFP*

W Indies rely on pace to find form

BY LAWRENCE PRESCOTT
in Trinidad

THE WEST INDIES selectors named six fast bowlers in a 15-man squad to play Australia in the first Test beginning in Port of Spain, Trinidad, on Friday as they strive to recover from their disastrous tour of South Africa.

The line-up includes the two recently injured bowlers, Curtly Ambrose and Courtney Walsh, and four other fast bowlers, Merv Dillon, Reon King, Pedro Collins and Corey Collymore.

The chairman of selectors, Michael Findlay, said both bowlers had been passed fit despite not having played a competitive match since returning from the South Africa tour last month.

After losing the Test series 5-0 in South Africa, the West Indies captain, Brian Lara, admitted his home ground, the Queen's Park Oval, could be just the place to get a flying start against Australia. "It's going to be tough but playing in Trinidad has been very good to West Indian cricket in the past," he said.

Lara is waiting for the results of a scan taken to determine the damage done to his right wrist in South Africa but is confident he will be fit.

Vice-captain Carl Hooper was unavailable for selection because he is in Australia looking after his new-born son, who is ill. Findlay said he had spoken to Hooper recently and was given no indication when he would be returning to the Caribbean.

The West Indies squad will be cut to 12 and a vice-captain named later in the week.

Five of the squad – batsmen Suruj Ragoonath, Dave Joseph and Lincoln Roberts along with fast bowlers Pedro Collins and Corey Collymore have not played Test cricket.

WEST INDIES (from): B C Lara (capt), S L Campbell, S Ragoonath, O R E Joseph, J C Adams, R I C Holder, P V Simmons, L A Roberts, R T Jacobs, C A Walsh, C E L Ambrose, M Dillon, R D King, P T Collins, C Collymore.

Festival roar awaits the 'new Arkle'

Willie Mullins, the Irish trainer, has a strong hand for the Cheltenham Festival and Gold Cup hope Florida Pearl is his ace. By **Richard Edmondson**

Florida Pearl (left) working with Alexander Banquet on Willie Mullins' all-weather gallop in County Carlow *Caroline Norris*

BEFORE THE 1977 Derby, they stuffed The Minstrel's ears with cotton wool to prevent him from getting frightened by the Epsom cacophony. It worked. He won.

Another Irish horse, Florida Pearl, may need to be fitted with balaclava and hard hat if he is not to disappear over the horizon at the Cheltenham Festival in two weeks' time. Epsom was a whisper compared to the noise which will be generated at the foot of Cleeve Hill when the sainted Florida Pearl runs in the Gold Cup.

It does not take much to ignite the Irish dream for the Festival, the thought that they have an animal with which to beat their historical antagonists. Many have proved to be false dawns, but perhaps the most memorable was the real dawn, Dawn Run, who collected the Blue Riband in 1986. The chain of coincidence established is that she was trained Paddy Mullins, whose son Willie will now massage Florida Pearl before he leaps from his corner.

Willie recalls well that day 13 years ago when "the mare" emerged victorious. He cannot actually claim to have seen it, however. "I remember it vividly," he says. "I thought she was beaten after jumping the last and I turned away from the stands and I was already thinking about the next year." Then came a tremor, and a strange hail. "All of a sudden, all I could hear was this great shouting," he says. "When I looked round, the air was full of hats. The whole place was just erupting. I knew that could only mean one result."

It is now not one but two results which are required when the Irish come swarming into the Cotswolds. Florida Pearl will be weighed down greatly by money and expectation enough as it is, but if Istabraq also triumphs in the Champion Hurdle for Aidan O'Brien on the opening day the satchels will be groaning with paper content. If both win there will not be a dry glass in the house.

"When you're training a horse with this sort of ability it's a lot easier, and I'm sure Aidan will agree with that," Mullins says. "Worrying won't make him them faster so all we can do is get them fit on the day and if everything goes right it will take a good horse to beat either one. It would be a bigger burden if I didn't have a horse like this one."

The big horse carries the red and white colours of Mrs Violet O'Leary, the wife of the former Irish rugby international, Archie O'Leary. Archie, who has twice skippered a boat in the Irish Admiral's Cup team, has turned down offers of over £300,000 for his breathing property. He acknowledges this is the chance. O'Leary has been through the wonder of top class sport but he nevertheless admits he dreams about Florida Pearl. He is not the only one.

Willie Mullins, though, knows all too well where dreams can terminate. He trains on a farm in Closutton, about four miles from his father at Doninga, in the Leighlinbridge area of Co Carlow. Just up the road is a graveyard. At 42, Mullins Jnr is now in the vanguard of Ireland's trainers and this may well be the most fruitful Festival of a career that has been punctuated by glorious victories both in and out of the saddle.

Alexander Prize will contest a bumper in which his trainer has a surreal tradition. He has scooped the last three. Alexander Banquet (Royal & SunAlliance Novices' Hurdle) and Wither Or Which (Supreme Novices') will now attempt to continue their unbeaten Cheltenham records, hut it is the horse they sandwiched as the Festival bumper winner who earns the most attention.

Florida Pearl has a big head with a big stripe and, if he was vain, the gelding might inquire if his powerful bottom looked big in his hide. When he enters the arena it is hard to believe that this can be a nimble jumping horse. Florida Pearl's proportions suggest he has come snorting from the Camargue. But performance has told us that this animal is both bull and matador. He uses his physique so well that Richard Dunwoody, the horse's regular partner, knows he is always in for a white knuckle ride as he tries to restrain his confederate.

Florida Pearl was purchased from the great horse trader Tom Costello for £50,000 after just one point-to-point run. He ran in just two humpers, the second his Cheltenham win, before being sent straight over fences. On his third start over the larger obstacles he collected last year's Royal & SunAlliance Novices' Chase after a duel with David Nicholson's Escartefigue.

At Christmas, though, came the extraordinary sight of this huge animal coming to grief when he fell in the Ericsson Chase at Leopardstown. It was rarther like watching a lighthouse crash into the ocean. Florida Pearl has subsequently recovered his reputation with a further defeat of Escartefigue back at the same course, when he seemed to be rather pleased with himself on the run-in and deigned the opportunity to run right away from his field.

Some believe this characteristic means Florida Pearl will be found out when he has to drag himself up and down the dramatic contours of the Gold Cup circuit. Others consider that the seven-year-old has yet to dip seriously into his bank of reserves and is just waiting for a campfire scrap to show his mettle. This is the beauty and excitement of Florida Pearl. We are not yet sure how good he is. Certainly worse horses have been called the new Arkle.

This high beast of promise will be placed on the anvil in 15 days' time and asked to conquer the best, conquer the intricacies of Prestbury Park and conquer the great wailing wall of noise as he turns into that most demanding of straights. For a horse, the Festival run-in is the equivalent of being sent into shelling on no-man's-land.

"He has a huge amount of ability and it might be we'll finally found out about his courage in the Gold Cup," Mullins says. "He showed a lot of courage last year when he hit the front a long way out and then Escartefigue came back at him. To me, he was always doing enough to stay in front.

"Just to come up that hill into the Festival roar is hard enough. It's the most daunting thing a horse and jockey can do."

HUNTER CHASE POINTERS

MARKS TEY (27 Feb)

Tombola simply ran away with the Mens Open. Leading at the fourth fence, the eight-year-old drew clear from the fifth-last to score by a distance from Coolvawn Lady in the fastest time of the day.

BADBURY RINGS (27 Feb)

Yquem outclassed his rivals in the Confined. Waited with, the nine-year-old made headway to lead four out and cruised clear for an easy five lengths win over Silver Sleeve in the quickest time on the card.

MARKET RASEN (28 Feb)

Forest Fountain won the Mens Open in style. Always prominent and jumping fluently throughout, the eight-year-old took a narrow lead six out and forged clear from the second-last to beat Mr Dick by 12 lengths in the best time of the day.

Ian Davies

■ Stanley bookmakers bet on the Foxhunters Chase at the Cheltenham Festival: 4-1 Elegant Lord, 9-2 Castle Mane, 6-1 Irish Stout, Struggles Glory, 10-1 others.

Fitzgerald has Call over Tizzard

MICK FITZGERALD scored a treble at Leicester yesterday but the Irish jockey will have taken even more pleasure from news that he has been awarded the sought-after ride on Call Equiname in the Queen Mother Champion Chase at the Cheltenham Festival.

Call Equiname won the Victor Chandler Chase at Kempton on his only outing so far this season. Paul Nicholls, who trains the grey, confirmed the booking yesterday, saying: "I have booked Mick as Joe Tizzard will he on board Green Green Desert as be has won on him twice this season and gets on really well with the horse."

Tizzard, the stable's No 1 retained rider, rode Call Equiname in the Victor Chandler and will no doubt be disappointed. Call Equiname is a top-priced 5-1 second favourite with Hills for the two-mile chasers' crown, while Green Green Desert is a rank outsider.

Lake Kariba, who would have been Nicholls' third contestant in the race, is now likely to side-step the event in favour of a tilt at the Grand Annual Handicap Chase.

The trainer said: "Depending on what weight he gets and on the ground, Lake Kariba will probably go for the Grand Annual – but if it got soft at Cheltenham he may well by-pass the meeting altogether."

RICHARD EDMONDSON
Nap: Oban
(Chepstow 4.20)
NB: King Priam
(Wolverhampton 3.40)

Fitzgerald is 14-1 to be the top jockey at the three-day Cheltenham meeting which starts on 16 March. Corals' book on the London Clubs Trophy for the leading rider at the 1999 Festival has last year's winner, Tony McCoy, heading the market at 13-8 favourite to retain the Trophy.

A Festival absentee will be Young Kenny, winner of the Greenalls Grand National Trial at Haydock on Saturday. He may re-appear in the Midlands Grand National at Uttoxeter two weeks on Saturday. Peter Beaumont, the eight-year-old's trainer, reported that he had come out of the race in good heart and said: "We won't take him to the Cheltenham Festival but we might go to Uttoxeter. There is a very good prize on offer there and the trip will suit him – though he would want some cut in the ground. We also have the Irish Grand National a couple of weeks later in mind so we will see how we go."

Young Kenny's stable companion, Island Chief, started one of five co-favourites for the Greenalls race but was last of the 11 finishers. However, he will be going to Cheltenham. Beaumont said: "We want to run him in the National Hunt Chase so hopefully the ground will not be like it was at Haydock – it was very sticky and it did not suit him at all."

Meanwhile, today's meetings at Chepstow and Wetherby are subject to inspections. Rodger Farrant, clerk of the course at Chepstow said: "We have called the inspection following continuous beavy rain."

A Wetherby spokesman said: "It has been raining most of the day, which was not forecast, and if we get much more tonight we will have problems."

LONDON CLUBS TROPHY: Coral: 13-8 Tony McCoy, 11-4 Norman Williamson, 7-1 Richard Dunwoody, 10-1 Charlie Swan, 14-1 Paul Carberry, Joe Tizzard, Mick Fitzgerald, 16-1 Richard Johnson, 20-1 Adrian Maguire, 33-1 others.

RESULTS

LEICESTER

Going: Soft (Heavy patches)

2.20 (2m 4f 110yds novice handicap chase)
1. CATHERINE'S WAY...M A Fitzgerald 5-1
2. Oriental Style...B Fenton 8-1
3. The Hatcher...O Leahy 11-1
Also ran: 9-2 fav Sister Gale (pulled up), 11-2 Eskleybrook, 6-1 Credo Boy, 9-1 Fighting Times (4th), 12-1 Reflex Courier, 16-1 Welburn Boy, 25-1 Reluckino, 50-1 Chief Chippie.
11 ran. 22, 3, dist. (*Winner bay gelding by Mandalus out of Sharp Approach, trained by Andrew Turnell at Wantage for R K Carvill*) Tote: £3.70; £2.70, £1.60, £1.60. DF: £71.30. CSF: £30.47. Tricast: £379.10.

2.50 (2m 7f 110yds handicap chase)
1. ELTIGRI...M A Fitzgerald 11-2
2. Madam Muck...C Llewellyn 11-4 jt fav
3. Jazzman...E Husband 4-1
Also ran: 11-4 jt fav Liver Bird (4th), 6-1 Daddy Dancer (pulled up), 10-1 Rocky Park (pulled up).
6 ran. 8, 5, 20. (*Winner bay gelding by Mistigri out of Obeguine II, trained by T Casey at Dorking for A T A Wates*) Tote: £5.50; £2.00, £2.30. DF: £4.10. CSF: £19.41.

3.20 (2m 4f 110yds handicap chase)
1. RED BEAN...R Johnson 7-1
2. Flapjack Lad...C Llewellyn 7-2 fav
3. Brownrath King...Mr J Crowley 8-1
Also ran: 4-1 Copperhurst, 4-1 Indian Run, 11-2 Fawori Pendragon, 33-1 Stage Player.
7 ran. 13, 10. (*Winner chestnut gelding by Ginger Boy out of Fhanona, trained by Simon Earle at Sturminster Newton for Swan Thrift*) Tote: £15.50; £3.40, £1.90. DF: £5.70. CSF: £25.61.

3.50 (2m 7f 110yds novice chase)
1. LOTHIAN COMMANDER...G Bradley 8-1
2. Samuel Wilderspin...R Johnson 4-9 fav
3. Sweep Clean...A Thornton 7-1
Also ran: 12-1 Greyton (4th), 25-1 Hesqueen'sclubs (did not finish).
5 ran. Sh-hd, dist, dist. (*Winner chestnut gelding by Alias Smith out of Lothian Light, trained by D McCain at Cholmondeley for Roger Bellamy*) Tote: £13.00; £1.20, £1.70. DF: £3.20. CSF: £10.66.

4.20 (2m 4f 110yds novice chase)
1. ROMANCER...C Llewellyn 13-8
2. Strong Vision...N Williamson 5-4 fav
Only two finished.
Also ran: 9-2 Ferryhill, 10-1 No Matter, 50-1 Velapa Prince.
5 ran. Hd. (*Winner brown gelding by Gardoon out of Courtesane, trained by Matt Archer & Miss Jean Broadhurst for N Twiston-Davies at Cheltenham*) Tote: £1.90; £1.10, £1.40. DF: £3.10. CSF: £3.96.

4.50 (2m 1f handicap chase)
1. CENTAUR EXPRESS...M A Fitzgerald 5-4 jt fav
2. Northern Saddler...R Johnson 9-4 jt fav
3. Boulevard Bay...J A McCarthy 5-2
Also ran: 6-1 Astral Invasion (4th), 20-1 Music Please.
5 ran. 12, 20, 15. (*Winner bay gelding by Siberian Express out of Gay Twenties, trained by A Streeter at Uttoxeter for Centaur Racing Ltd*) Tote: £2.40; £1.90, £1.60. DF: £2.00. CSF: £7.11. NR: Colonel Blazer.
Placepot: £17.20. **Quadpot:** £2.10.
Place 6: £30.54. **Place 5:** £5.99.

CATTERICK

Going: Soft (Heavy patches)

2.00: 1. MISCONDUCT (A Maguire) 4-11 fav; **2. Madge McSplash** 33-1; **3. Carol Again** 50-1. 15 ran. 5, 9. (Mrs Merrita Jones, Lambourn). Tote: £1.60; £1.10, £4.40, £7.10. DF: £14.00. CSF: £24.62. Tricast: £401.05.

2.30: 1. WILD HADEER (B Grattan) 33-1; **2. Willyelkra** 11-4; **3. The Lambton Worm** 14-1. 13 ran. 9-4 fav Es Go (5th). 5, 2. (John R Upson, Adstone). Tote: £52.40; £8.60, £1.30, £3.70. DF: £178.40. CSF: £129.08. NRs: Moving Arrow, Parlez Moi d'Amour.

3.00: 1. BANKER COUNT (A P McCoy) 10-11 fav; **2. Telatheth** 25-1; **3. Echo's Of Dawn** 14-1. 11 ran. 2, hd. (M W Easterby, Sheriff Hutton). Tote: £1.60; £1.10, £5.30, £1.40. DF: £13.40. CSF: £26.24. NRs: Jessolle, Onyourown, Prime Style.

3.30: 1. TIFASI (W Marston) 10-1; **2. Real Fire** 25-1; **3. Wynbury Flyer** 11-2 fav; **4. Connel's Croft** 8-1. 17 ran. 2½, 7. (M Wilkinson, Banbury). Tote: £13.70; £1.80, £1.00, £11.20, £5.10. DF: £256.00. CSF: £226.38. Tricast: £1409.02. NRs: Dunston Heath, Lanacar Lane, Members Welcome, Pancras Lord.

4.00: 1. TO-DAY TO-DAY (R Supple) 10-1; **2. Polar King** 6-1; **3. I'm The Man** 5-1. 11 ran. 5-2 fav Shardante. 1¼, 1¼. (L Lungo, Carrutherstown). Tote: £12.00; £3.90, £3.10, £3.10. DF: £42.30. CSF: £67.39. Tricast: £312.16. NRs: Aztec Flyer, Beundtohonour, Branch End, Far Finnish, Highfield Gent.

4.30: 1. PRINCE OF SAINTS (B Harding) 7-2; **2. Golden Hello** 5-1; **3. Minster Glory** 7-4 fav. 6 ran. 7, 7. (M Hammond, Middleham). Tote: £4.80; £1.80, £3.10. DF: £17.10. CSF: £18.28. NR: Zahid.

5.00: 1. ERRAND BOY (S Durack) 5-1; **2. Ireland's Eye** 7-2; **3. Regal Island** 5-1. 14 ran. 9-4 fav Supreme Fortune (4th). 3½, 12. (Mrs S Smith, Bingley). Tote: £6.80; £3.00, £2.30, £2.80. DF: £11.40. CSF: £22.07. NRs: Camar Crusader, What A Topper.
Jackpot: Not won.
Placepot: £647.00. **Quadpot:** £50.51.
Place 6: £213.20. **Place 5:** £164.32.

LINGFIELD

Going: Standard

2.10: 1. BIGWIG (Mr I Mongan) 10-11 fav; **2. Catchment** 8-1; **3. Shanghai Lil** 9-2. 12 ran. 3, 3. (G L Moore). Tote: £1.50; £1.10, £3.60, £1.90. DF: £9.10. CSF: £7.49. Tricast: £23.50. NR: Double Flight.

2.40: 1. BOWCLIFFE GRANGE (J Fanning) 4-1; **2. Half Tone** 7-4 fav; **3. Dande Times** 10-1. 7 ran. 1, 2. (D Chapman). Tote: £5.10; £2.50, £1.10. DF: £5.50. CSF: £10.05.

3.10: 1. SHEER NATIVE (K Sked) 8-15 fav; **2. Wild Nettle** 14-1; **3. Manties Princess** 4-1. 8 ran. 13, 1½. (B Hills). Tote: £2.00; £1.00, £1.40, £4.10. DF: £5.10. CSF: £9.32.

3.40: 1. POWDER RIVER (Dean McKeown) 6-1; **2. Phillstar** 9-1; **3. Sick As A Parrot** 16-1. 14 ran. 3-1 fav Totom. 2½, 1¾. (K Burke). Tote: £8.70; £6.10, £3.80, £3.50. DF: £30.10. CSF: £58.03. Tricast: £786.30. Trifecta: £4,443.20; £3,817.41 carried forward to Wolverhampton 5.15 today.

4.10: 1. SLEAVE SILK (J Quinn) Evens fav; **2. Herr Trigger** 7-2; **3. Padauk** 5-1. 8 ran. Sh-hd, 3. (W Musson). Tote: £1.60; £1.10, £1.40. DF: £3.10. CSF: £1.00.

4.40: 1. CASTLES BURNING (J Weaver) 4-1; **2. Mister Tricky** 4-1; **3. Nautical Warning** 5-2. 7 ran. 9-4 fav Compton Akka (5th). 2½, ½. (C Cyzer). Tote: £4.70; £2.00, £3.60. DF: £10.30. CSF: £19.57.
Placepot: £76.00. **Quadpot:** £38.33.
Place 6: £40.24. **Place 5:** £33.26.

FIRST SHOW

WOLVERHAMPTON 3.40

	C	H	L	S	T
Thaloyard	11-4	11-4	9-4	3-1	5-2
Baron De Pichon	10-3	10-3	7-2	10-3	3-1
High Noon	7-2	3-1	7-2	10-3	7-2
Wait-A-Minute	6-1	9-2	7-1	6-1	6-1
King Priam	11-2	10-2	6-1	7-1	7-1
Sunlach	10-1	9-1	11-1	10-1	9-1
Temeraire	10-1	10-1	9-1	10-1	11-1

Each-way, a quarter the odds, places 1, 2
C Coral, H William Hill, L Ladbrokes, S Stanley, T Tote

CHEPSTOW

HYPERION
2.20 In The Blood
2.50 Pridewood Fuggle
3.20 Spring Double (nb)
3.50 Kingsmark
4.20 Miss Diskin
4.55 Picket Piece

INSPECTION 7.45am

GOING: Heavy.
■ Left-hand, undulating course with a run-in of 240yds.
■ Course is on A466. Chepstow station (Cardiff – Gloucester line) 1m. **ADMISSION:** Club £15; Tattersalls £11 (OAPs £9). **CAR PARK:** Free. Under-16s free all enclosures.

FIVE-YEAR STATISTICS
■ **LEADING TRAINERS:** M Pipe 41-203 (20.2%), P Nicholls 28-100 (28%), P Hobbs 27-100 (27%), N T-Davies 22-121 (18.2%), O Nicholson 17-82 (20.7%), J Old 9-40 (22.5%).
■ **LEADING JOCKEYS:** A P McCoy 36-152 (23.7%), R Dunwoody 23-112 (20.5%), C Llewellyn 18-110 (16.4%), R Johnson 15-85 (17.6%), A Maguire 14-69 (20.3%).
■ **FAVOURITES:** 151-392 (38.5%).
BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Glacial King (3.20), Executive Decision (4.55).

2.20 GREAT EXPECTATIONS HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS D) £5,250 added 2m 3f 110yds Penalty Value £3,539

1 1-11PF IRBEE (67) (CD) (J A Keighley and Mr Paul K Barber) P Nicholls 7 11 13...J Tizzard
2 F3PP3F DENICHEUR (FR) (7) (Mrs W Morrell) Mrs L Taylor 8 11 2...O McPhail (5)
3 2221-1 IN THE BLOOD (22) (L Shaw) P Hobbs 8 11 1...C Maude
4 1-1302 THE EENS (32) (BF) (Straw Hill Golf Club) D McCain 7 10 0...N Williamson
5 433U3P KOO'S PROMISE (29) (G A Warren Limited) C Popham 8 10 0...R Johnson
– 5 declared –

Minimum weight: 10st. True handicap weights: The Eens 9st 11lb, Koo's Promise 9st 3lb.
BETTING: 8-13 In The Blood, 11-4 Irbee, 4-1 The Eens, 20-1 Denicheur, 25-1 Koo's Promise.
1998: Meeting abandoned due to waterlogging

FORM GUIDE
Irbee: Promising 10 lengths winner over Calon Lan over C&D in Nov (good to soft) but let down by jumping in smart company at Ascot and Kempton since. Drop in class should put less pressure on his jumping, although plenty to do at weights
Denicheur: Cross-country winner in France. Poor completion record here
In The Blood: Confirmed last season's promise with impressive 5 lengths win from Jasons Boy on Fontwell return (2m2f hcap, soft). Leniently treated only 5lb higher
The Eens: Running respectably since 6 lengths Haydock win over Golden Hello from 7lb lower, but up against it from 3lb out of handicap on latest 12 lengths 2nd to Jaunty General at Ayr (2m hcap, heavy)
Koo's Promise: 11lb out of the handicap and looks remote prospect, even on career-best 9 lengths 3rd to Malwood Castle at Wincanton (3m1f hcap, heavy) in Jan
VERDICT: IN THE BLOOD is a chaser of some potential and he looks thrown in on his latest effort at Fontwell, where he had the race sewn up three out. Irbee has the potential to give him a race, but these are tricky fences for an uncertain jumper

2.50 POACHER'S SELLING HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS G) £2,500 added 2m 110yds Penalty Value £2,248

1 200-P BREAK THE RULES (15) (D) (Nick Shutts) Miss K Marks 7 12 0...C Rafter (7)
2 53-25P GRAND CRU (34) (Alan Spargo Ltd Toolmakers) J Cullinan 8 11 8...N Kavanagh (7)
3 424665 SHADIRWAN (49) (C L Popham) C Popham 8 11 7...O McPhail (5)
4 F0642 BRETECHE (FR) (13) (BF) (Gerry Scanlon & Miss J Kirk) M Pipe 4 10 10...A P McCoy V
5 0P1-0P GOLDEN FILM (99) (Mrs M Llewellyn) B Llewellyn 11 10 9...S Wynne
6 00040 HEAD GARDENER (19) (C) (Another Comedy Partnership) R Lee 5 10 8...Mr P Costello (7) B
7 545 TRAKELOR (80) (L A Morgan) R Hollinshead 4 10 3...Gary Lyons
8 503-20 BONNY (GER) (13) (D J Wintle) D Wintle 6 10 3...W Marston
9 PP-33 PRIDEWOOD FUGGLE (23) (Mrs B Morris) R J Price 9 10 0...R Johnson
10 23S3P BALMORAL PRINCESS (27) (D) (Mrs S K Maan) D McCain 6 10 0...R Bellamy
11 F3320 NOTHING DOING (F20) (Broughton Bloodstock) W Musson 10 10 0...N Williamson
12 52645 BOW BELLS (16) (Jack Joseph) J Joseph 4 10 0...J Goldstein (3)
13 -001P SANDANTE (27) (M West) R Buckler 9 10 0...D O'Sullivan (7)
14 5305P EASY OVER (USA) (231) (D) (Mrs D Thomas) Mrs D Thomas 13 10 0...Mr R Forristal (5)
15 P5-P0 FLASHMAN (117) (Ken Russell) B Llewellyn 9 10 0...Miss E J Jones
16 0003-P SEE MINNOW (106) (Miss S Waterman) Miss S Waterman 8 10 0...Mr D O'Meara (7)
– 16 declared –

Minimum weight: 10st. True handicap weights: Nothing Doing & Bow Bells 9st 12lb, Sandante 9st 7lb, Easy Over 9st 3lb, Flashman 9st 1lb, See Minnow 8st 12lb.
BETTING: 4-1 Breteche, 6-1 Pridewood Fuggle, 13-2 Bonny, 8-1 Bow Bells, Trakelor, 10-1 Golden Film, Grand Cru, Head Gardener, 12-1 Shadirwan, Nothing Doing, 16-1 others

FORM GUIDE
Break The Rules: Useful performer for Martin Pipe in 1996-97. Lightly-raced since and looked light of past when well backed and pulled up on Leicester reappearance
Grand Cru: Chance on 10 lengths 4th to Andy's Lad at Warwick (2m3f hcap, soft) in Dec, from 4lb higher, but finds this trip on sharp side and ran poorly latest
Shadirwan: On slide since useful 2½ lengths 2nd to Native Field at Newton Abbot (2m6f hcap, good to soft) in Nov from 9lb higher and needs a test of stamina now
Breteche: On the upgrade last 2 starts and likely to play a big role with repeat of latest short-head 2nd to Stretching at Taunton (2m1f sell hcap, good) from 3lb lower, although testing ground not ideal
Golden Film: Chance on late-season Worcester 3m novice handicap win over What Jim Wants but has run poorly in two starts over hurdles and fences this term
Head Gardener: Poor form either side of length win over Dandorell in conditions seller over 2m4f here in Dec (good). Tailed off latest and hard to fancy
Trakelor: Possibilities on 8 lengths 4th to Optimistic Chris in Uttoxeter seller (2m, heavy) in Dec. Given plenty to do latest start and one to consider on handicap debut
Bonny: Found 3m too far latest but every chance on previous 2 lengths 2nd to Coble at Ludlow (2m sell hcap, good to soft) from 3lb lower
Pridewood Fuggle: Produced too early when 12 lengths 3rd to Tylo Steamer after good backing at Fontwell (2m6f sell hcap, soft) and probably worth another chance, although held by Bonny on previous Ludlow form
Balmoral Princess: Weighted to play a part on length 3rd to Simply at Towcester (2m5f sell hcap, heavy) in Jan but is not one to trust and has little heart for a battle
Nothing Doing: Unreliable in past and reluctant to race when 13th of 14 to Rusk at Huntingdon on reappearance, but Williamson booked and possibly worth betting check
Bow Bells: Probably flattered by latest 5th of 7 to It's Wallace in slowly-run race at Plumpton, but entitled to respect on previous 18 lengths 4th to Park Royal at Lingfield (2m sell hcap, heavy) off this mark
Sandante: Poor form either side of Exeter 2m1f sell hcap win over Viscount Tully in Jan. 7lb out of handicap now and makes limited appeal
Easy Over: Moderate veteran. No show on only start last 30 months
Flashman: Soon behind both starts this term and 13lb out of handicap here
See Minnow: Rarely beaten less than a distance these days and no obvious chance
VERDICT: The return to the minimum trip should suit BONNY, who looks the pick of the weights on her reappearance 2nd to Coble (subsequent winners High Low and Tremendisto just behind). Breteche and Pridewood Fuggle have some appeal, but the big danger could be Bow Bells, who has been making steady progress in recent outings and is open to more improvement than many of her rivals.

3.20 GILLIE'S NOVICE CHASE (CLASS D) £5,250 added 3m Penalty Value £3,870

1 PP31/3 BALLYBOLLEN (61) (D) (Terry Neill and Lady Thompson) M Pipe 7 11 7...R Greene
2 005446 DUNNICKS TOWN (29) (F G Tucker) F Tucker 7 11 7...G Supple (3)
3 50P5(6)B FASTINI GOLD (29) (A E Price) R J Price 7 11 7...J Mogford (7) B
4 F2-PP3 GLACIAL KING (30) (D) (Mrs E K Ellis) K Bishop 7 11 7...B Powell B
5 -034FP HIGH THYNE (61) (D) (The Net Partnership) P Hobbs 8 11 7...R Widger (5) B
6 UP/18- LEDBURIAN (305) (D) (Mrs Yvonne Allsop) A Hobbs 9 11 7...W Marston
7 42P/4F ROYAL RAVEN (14) (A D Waller) J Gifford 8 11 7...L Aspell
8 2-304P SEE ENOUGH (44) (CD) (J A G Meaden) R Buckler 11 11 7...J R Kavanagh
9 33-22P SPRING DOUBLE (11) (Mrs Lorna Berryman) N Twiston-Davies 8 11 7...C Llewellyn
10 4P3654 BALLY LIRA (16) (Victor Thorne) P Rodford 7 11 2...S Burrough
– 10 declared –

BETTING: 5-6 Spring Double, 9-2 Ballybollen, 7-1 Royal Raven, 8-1 See Enough, 12-1 Ledburian, High Thyne, 25-1 others

FORM GUIDE
Ballybollen: Winning Irish pointer. Little show when beaten distance into 3rd on Plumpton hurdles debut for Pipe yard. Market the best guide
Dunnicks Town: Beaten a distance last four starts (two in good company) and difficult to fancy despite safe jumping.
Fastini Gold: Yet to build on 34 lengths 5th to Dark Stranger on Ludlow chase debut (2m nov handicap, good to soft). Looks a remote prospect
Glacial King: Blinkered first time after series of dismal efforts over fences (distant 3rd of 3 finishers latest). Probably best watched
High Thyne: Dismal efforts since 60 lengths 4th to Marlborough at Worcester (2m4f nov, heavy) in Nov. Slow and likely to need marathon distances. Richard Dunwoody was originally expected to take this mount but Robert Widger has been booked now
Ledburian: Very moderate performer over hurdles and fences 2 seasons ago. Point-to-point winner since and making debut for new yard. Market best guide
Royal Raven: Early faller latest, but signs of ability when 30 lengths 4th to Andsuephi on Wincanton chase debut (2m5f nov, soft). Possible improver, but plenty to find
See Enough: Former useful staying hurdler, yet to transfer that ability to fences, although creditable 38 lengths 6th to Kendal Cavalier in Welsh National here (3m5f, soft). Disappointing both outings since and possibly needs marathon trip
Spring Double: Outclassed at Ascot latest but clear form pick on previous 13 lengths 2nd to Cheerful Aspect at Towcester (2m6f nov, heavy). Not the best of jumpers, but should be able to take his time in this company
Bally Lira: Poor form in mostly moderate company and looks well held by Spring Double on Kempton running behind Marlborough
VERDICT: Few of these seem likely ever to grace the winner's enclosure, and a clear round should be sufficient for SPRING DOUBLE to break the ice. Royal Raven, High Thyne and See Enough could fight out the placings

3.50 PRESTIGE NOVICE HURDLE (Grade 2) (CLASS A) £15,000 added 3m Penalty Value £9,555

1 1-2161 BUCK'S PALACE (25) (D) (P K Barber and Mr J Keighley) P Nicholls 6 11 6...J Tizzard
2 3-1111 KINGSMARK (38) (Robert Ogden) O Sherwood 6 11 6...R Dunwoody
3 F41-21 STORM CASTLE (29) (D) (Noel Cronin) D Arbuthnot 7 11 3...D Gallagher
4 -15311 KATES CHARM (25) (The Happy Band) R Alner 6 11 1...A Thornton
5 21422 GENTLE RIVAGE (39) (G and D Keeys) N Twiston-Davies 5 11 0...C Llewellyn
– 5 declared –

BETTING: 13-8 Kingsmark, 2-1 Kates Charm, 7-2 Buck's Palace, 8-1 Gentle Rivage, 10-1 Storm Castle

FORM GUIDE
Buck's Palace: Has looked a very useful prospect at times, particularly when edging out dual subsequent winner Goodtime George at Wincanton (2m6f, soft). Powerful sort, open to more improvement but ran moderately in handicap company here
Kingsmark: Progressing with experience and particularly impressive when beating Chicago City at Folkestone (2m6f, soft) and Gentle Rivage at Kempton (2m5f nov, soft).
Storm Castle: Struggled to beat Master Rastus in a moderate maiden hurdle at Taunton (3m, soft) and looks up against it in this far better company
Kates Charm: Form pick on her easy 10-length win over more experienced Ebullient Equiname in handicap company at Uttoxeter (2m6f, heavy). On the upgrade
Gentle Rivage: No match for Kingsmark when outpaced from 2 out at Kempton and will struggle to turn tables on 1lb worse terms
VERDICT: There is probably better to come from both Kingsmark and Buck's Palace, but KATES CHARM posted her credentials when scoring in emphatic fashion at Uttoxeter, where she would have had even more to spare but for a mistake at the last.

4.20 HUNTSMAN'S HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS C) £8,000 added 3m Penalty Value £5,680

1 13P-1P SPARKLING CONE (80) (C) (BF) (Mrs M Horton) Miss V Williams 10 12 0...N Williamson
2 142U0- BRAVE HIGHLANDER (319) (D) (S N J Embiricos) J Gifford 11 11 10...P Hide
3 303P-3 WITH IMPUNITY (11) (C) (G Z Mizel) P Nicholls 10 11 4...J Tizzard
4 13402- ORSWELL LAD (324) (D) (R M E Wright) P Hobbs 10 11 4...Mr P Flynn (7) B
5 1212-3 MISS DISKIN (79) (Martyn Forrester) R Buckler 10 10 10...B Powell
6 432342 OBAN (41) (Lord Hartington) Miss H Knight 9 10 10...J Culloty B
7 4-P212 MAJORS LEGACY (26) (D) (Mrs G Leigh) H Daly 10 10 7...R Johnson
8 2-2F3P HERHORSE (13) (Miss A Howard-Chappell) Miss A Howard-Chappell 12 10 0...W Marston
9 P-42P6 BENJAMIN LANCASTER (28) (C) (D) (M Griffin) M Griffin 15 10 0...M Griffiths (5)
– 9 declared –

Minimum weight: 10st. True handicap weights: Herhorse 9st 13lb, Benjamin Lancaster 7st 13lb.
BETTING: 11-8 Sparkling Cone, 5-1 Majors Legacy, 6-1 Miss Diskin, 7-1 Oban, 10-1 Orswell Lad, With Impunity, 12-1 Brave Highlander, 20-1 Herhorse, 200-1 Benjamin Lancaster

FORM GUIDE
Sparkling Cone: Dismal failure when favourite and pulled up behind Rightsaidfred at Newbury after 7 lengths comeback win over Majors Legacy at Towcester (3m1f hcap, soft) from 8lb lower. Deserves another chance in this weaker company
Brave Highlander: Still on upgrade last term with Wincanton and Folkestone wins, and also ran well in Grand National. Weighted up to best (10lb higher than latest win)
With Impunity: Useful on his day (14 lengths 3rd in John Hughes at Aintree) and on a fair mark, but sketchy jumper and doubtful stayer. Below form when 3rd to The Outback Way at Warwick (2m4f hcap, good to soft) after 20-month lay-off
Orswell Lad: Lingfield winner from 5lb lower 13 months ago, but looked in handicapper's grip from around the mark afterwards. Something to find on reappearance
Miss Diskin: Out-and-out stayer sure to be thereabouts on 8 lengths 2nd to Hollybank Buck at Punchestown (3m1f hcap, soft) last April from 2lb higher. Should be sharper for promising Plumpton reappearance and will relish heavy ground
Oban: Improved for first-time blinkers when beaten 2½ lengths by Ziggy Lane at Taunton (3m3f hcap, heavy), but still error-prone and without a win for 2 years
Majors Legacy: Raised 10lb for 11 lengths Towcester win over Boots Madden. Likely to struggle to reverse previous 7 lengths defeat by Sparkling Cone on 2lb worse terms, but a dour stayer and sound jumper who could go well
Herhorse: Late developer who is not entirely out it on her head third to Lukewarm at Warwick (2m4f hcap, soft), from 3lb lower, but has run moderately since
Benjamin Lancaster: Fading veteran. No obvious chance from 29lb out of weights
VERDICT: The handicapper took a chance raising SPARKLING CONE only 8lb for his Towcester win, particularly in view of the runner-up's later success. But 12st is a hefty burden in heavy ground and Miss Diskin and Majors Legacy will be waiting to pounce

4.55 GAMEKEEPER'S HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS C) £6,500 added 2m 110yds Penalty Value £4,418

1 31PPP- THE FRENCH FURZE (P20) (D) (Jim Ennis) R Peacock 5 12 0...Mr N Fehily (7)
2 6-2055 EXECUTIVE DECISION (11) (D) (E Gurner & M Krysztofiak) P Nicholls 5 11 3...J Tizzard B
3 131443 LORD RICHFIELD (NZ) (11) (D) (M W & A N Harris) S Brookshaw 8 10 10...X Aizpuru (3)
4 3-33D4 DICTUM (16) (D) (BF) (Mrs R A Humphries) Miss H Knight 8 10 7...J Culloty
5 665111 PICKET PIECE (19) (D) (Mrs J Mould) D Nicholson 8 10 5...R Johnson
6 241 HEROS FATAL (FR) (26) (D) (Frank A Farrant) M Pipe 5 10 5...A P McCoy
– 6 declared –

BETTING: 2-1 Picket Piece, 3-1 Dictum, 7-2 Heros Fatal, 9-2 Lord Richfield, 8-1 Executive Decision, 25-1 The French Furze.

FORM GUIDE
The French Furze: Three-time scorer for Martin Pipe last term, but disappointing last three starts and best watched on first outing for new yard
Executive Decision: Good 6th to Zafarabad at Punchestown (2m, soft) last term but looking no better 4 starts for new connections and tried in blinkers now
Lord Richfield: Uttoxeter winner from 4lb lower. Looking exposed now and something to find on 7 lengths 3rd of 8 to Robbo at Newcastle (2m4f hcap, good to soft)
Dictum: Chance on 8 lengths 3rd to Rainwatch at Cheltenham (2m1f hcap, soft) in Jan. Below-form favourite at Haydock since and possibly has his own ideas
Picket Piece: Form of Cheltenham win over Buckside looking gilt-edged and defied 10lb rise to beat Carlys Quest at Newbury. Further 6lb increase may not stop him
Heros Fatal: Career-best effort to beat Westfield Cockney a length at Lingfield (2m maiden, heavy). Open to further improvement, but this is much tougher
VERDICT: There is no telling the improvement PICKET PIECE has under his belt. He certainly looks the most reliable proposition. Executive Decision has found little after travelling well in his races.

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Super League countdown: There is no safety net for Wakefield unlike fellow newcomers Gateshead

Debutants on a different scale

BY DAVE HADFIELD

THERE WILL be two clubs battling to establish their credibility when the Super League season opens this weekend. One is a novel and vaguely glamorous proposition; the other is familiar, faded and, according to everyone's assessment but their own, doomed.

Gateshead Thunder and Wakefield Trinity – now with a superfluous "Wildcats" added to their famoua and distinctive name – have both been built from scratch for the formidable challenge that lies ahead. But while Gateshead, aa a new club in new territory, have been freed from the overseas quota to bring in as many Australians of proven quality as they can afford, Wakefield have had to grab what they can from wherever they can get it.

That is not the only inequality. The Trinity coach, Andy Kelly, admits to more than a twinge of envy at the three-year security blanket with which the Thunder have been provided and which ensures they cannot be relegated from Super League in that time.

"We both have teams full of new players," he says. "The only different thing for Gateshead is that they can sit there getting to know each other for three years and we can't. The fair thing would have been for us to be in the same situation, but the fact is that we aren't."

Super League and Gateshead argue that without safety from relegation during the formative years, no new franchise would get off the ground. As things are shaping up for the Thunder, however, the importance of that concession could be purely academic.

The new club has had just two run-outs – an 18-8 defeat at Castleford and a 50-point romp at Hunslet – but the signs are that Gateshead could be more closely concerned with the top of the table than the bottom.

They were looking so slick at Hunslet, for instance, that their captain, Kerrod Walters, took the unusual step of asking the referee to allow their opponents to hang on longer in the tackle in order to make their job more difficult.

They are unlikely to make to make any similar request when Leeds travel to the Gateshead International Stadium this Sunday night, but it was clear from the expression on the face of their coach, Shaun McRae, last week that he is now satisfied that he has a highly capable squad at his disposal.

"When Walters, Willie Peters and Will Robinson move the football, they are a very good combination. Overall, I've got to be very happy with the way it's taking shape," he said.

When Kelly claims the same brand of confidence, the world of rugby league is more sceptical. The long, drawn-out process surrounding Trinity's promotion and funding left him with only a couple of months to put a team together and it is top-heavy with players who have had more than their share of injury problems or have had trouble settling elsewhere. Despite that, Kelly – who proved himself a resourceful young coach in steering Trinity to the title ahead of more fancied rivals last season – believes he has gathered a squad that will surprise a lot of people.

"I'm very positive about the side I've got," he insists. "We've only been together for six our eight weeks, but there's already a nice feeling of gelling about it. We're becoming more and more positive about what we're doing and looking forward to it, starting with our first match at Castleford on Sunday."

Kelly's key signing is undoubtedly Tony Kemp, the Kiwi international stand-off or loose forward from Leeds. "His value is already showing through. He's a very professional type of person and it's rubbing off on everybody."

It is via players like Kemp and the equally talented but never wholly settled Willie Poching that Kelly hopes to defy all the predictions.

"It's something we have to be aware of," he says of the universal expectation that Wakefield will be back where some consider they belong this time next year. "We are having our season written off for us before it even starts and to have all the forecasts telling you what a poor season you're going to have can be a bit hurtful.

"But if it wounds your pride you come out fighting."

The rhetoric at Gateshead is more along the lines of winning friends and influencing people; filling the International Stadium could represent a bigger hurdle to them than merely winning matches. It is unfortunate for them that their first game coincides with Newcastle United 's FA Cup-tie against Everton two and a half hours earlier.

It is typical of them, though, that they will try to turn a handicap into an asset, by arranging for announcements at St James' Park inviting Geordies to cross the Tyne to watch a second match that evening.

Like Wakefield, Gateshead have secured a lucrative sponsorship deal – the two newcomers are the envy of many existing Super League clubs in that respect – but they have also broken new ground by advertising on Tyne-Tees Television.

Their situation obliges them to be innovators. Wakefield, despite needing to take any televised matches to Barnsley because Belle Vue is not up to the job, will try to tap into a great reservoir of tradition and stubborn pride.

They will both be watched with enormous interest – and will be watching each other more keenly than most, comparing how two operations coming at it from completely different directions cope with the challenge ahead.

'We are having our season written off for us before it even starts,' says Andy Kelly, the Trinity coach. 'But if it wounds your pride you come out fighting' *Ben Duffy*

Kemp: Highly valued

Offiah to play in spite of tragedy

MARTIN OFFIAH will play for the London Broncos this weekend, despite the death of his father who was gunned down in his native Nigeria on Monday night. George Offiah, 63, a chief magistrate in the west African country, was killed by suspected car thieves, writes Dave Hadfield.

The 32-year-old Broncos star is "utterly devastated", said his agent, Alan McColm. "His father was in his Mercedes. He was challenged hy a group of individuals and shot dead."

The killing happened in the south eastern city of Onitsha, Nigeria's second largest commercial city.

The St Helens winger, Chris Smith, will miss the start of the new Super League season after being banned for three matches. Smith was ordered to appear in front of a disciplinary hearing yesterday after a tackle on the Leeds centre, Brad Godden, in Saturday's Silk Cut Challenge Cup tie was picked up on video.

He was found guilty of a late high tackle and his suspension increases the probability of the Wales international winger, *Anthony Sullivan, being* recalled to Saints' line-up after heing left out of the cup tie.

Sheffield Eagles' forward, Darren Turner, has been fined £1,000, half of it suspended, for making an obscene gesture to the crowd at Salford when he was on his way to the sin-bin near the end of the tie.

Turner is already suspended for six matches for the tackle for which he was sent to the sin-bin. "It was only a small gesture but it was seen by two and a half million people on television," said the Rugby League's media manager, John Huxley.

Gateshead's preparations for their match against Leeds on Sunday have been disrupted by their coach, Shaun McRae, slipping a disc. The new club's assistant coaches, Tony Anderson and Glen Workman, have taken charge of training.

The managing director of Super League, Maurice Lindsay, said at yesterday's launch of the new season that every club had reported an increase in season ticket sales this year.

Wigan have signed a young player with a famous name – Billie-Joe Edwards. The 16-year-old is the younger brother of the London Broncos captain, Shaun Edwards.

WETHERBY

HYPERION

2.00 Ilahabad 2.30 Niki Dea 3.00 Scotmail Lad 3.30 Bamburgh Boy 4.00 Jowoody 4.35 Brighter Shade 5.05 EASTERN PROJECT (nap)

INSPECTION 7.30am

GOING: Soft (Heavy in places).
■ Left-hand oval circuit. Run-in of 200yds slightly uphill.
■ Course is NE of town on B1224 near junction of A58 and A1.
ADMISSION: Club £13 (accompanied under-16s free); Tattersalls £9, Course £3 (OAPs £1.50) or £10 per car with up to four adults. *Accompanied under-16s free* CAR PARK: Free.

FIVE-YEAR STATISTICS
■ LEADING TRAINERS: Mrs M Reveley 40-193 (20.7%), T Easterby 32-144 (22.2%), Mrs A Smith 19-111 (17.1%), O Nicholson 17-79 (21.5%).
■ LEADING JOCKEYS: L Wyer 46-188 (24.5%), P Niven 33-156 (21.2%), A Dobbin 22-129 (17.1%), R Guest 19-86 (22.1%).
■ FAVOURITES: 207-487 (42.5%).
■ LONG DISTANCE RUNNERS: Triple Triumph (400) sent 2½ miles.
■ BUNKERED FIRST TIME: Earp (505)

2.00 HAREWOOD NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS E) £3,000 added 2m

1 -3F421 CHIEF WARDANCE (11) (D) Mrs S Lamyman 5 11 7 ..... R Ferrant
2 -40046 NOSHINANNIKIN (11) M W Easterby 5 11 7 ..... R Thornton
3 BEAUCHAMP KING (F144) G A Butler 6 11 2 ..... M A Fitzgerald
4 50-00P CARONISU (75) J Mackie 6 11 2 ..... R Supple
5 P-53 LOBBINGALONG (140) N Richards 5 11 2 ..... A Dobbin
6 5010 MISTER GIGI (901) (D) Miss M Rowland 6 11 2 ..... A S Smith
7 3F23-0 TEMPO (86) (D) M Pitt 7 11 2 ..... F Lashy
8 221 ILAHABAD (13) J FitzGerald 4 10 0 ..... P Niven
9 365 SUPER NOMAD (153) M W Easterby 4 10 8 ..... C McCormack (3)
10 6 TAAKID (USA) (14) M Hammond 4 10 8 ..... B Harding
– 10 declared –

BETTING: 9-4 Beauchamp King, 9-4 Ilahabad, 7-2 Chief Wardance, 13-1 Lobbingalong, 16-1 Noshinannikin, Taakid, 20-1 Tempo, 33-1 others

FORM VERDICT
The outcome principally hangs on whether or not Beauchamp King takes to the game. A Supreme Novices' Hurdle acceptor, he was not one to place much faith in on the Flat, and his headstrong tendencies mean his unproven stamina could also be a factor. In the circumstances, ILAHABAD looks the one.

2.30 MARK COCKER NOVICE CHASE (CLASS D) £5,250 added 3m 1f

1 1U31P3 ARDENT SCOUT (25) (CD) Mrs B Smith 7 11 12 ..... S Durack
2 21P11 NIKI DEE (23) (C) P Beaumont 9 11 12 ..... R Supple
3 5-4U30 THE OTHER MAN (33) Miss L Siddall 9 11 3 ..... T Siddall (3)
4 236523 GRAIN D'ESTRUVAL (81) M Hammond 5 10 7 ..... B Harding 5
– 4 declared –

BETTING: 11-10 Niki Dee, 2-1 Ardent Scout, 11-4 Grain D'Estruval, 40-1 The Other Man

FORM VERDICT
NIKI DEE comes here in good form after an improved win and with a proven liking for this track. Ardent Scout would be a formidable opponent at his best but has been below form more often than not this season. He is still much respected and is the main danger.

3.00 MICKLETHWAITE HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS D) £4,000 added 2m 4f 110yds

1 FU2FR4 KING PIN (25) (D) P Beaumont 7 11 10 ..... B Grattan (3)
2 3/4F3F SHU GAA (84) J Mackie 8 11 9 ..... R Supple
3 030-00 EXECUTIVE DESIGN (88) Mrs M Reveley 7 11 8 ..... P Niven
4 1341f5 SCOTMAIL LAD (25) (CD) G M Moore 5 11 6 ..... N Hannity (5)
5 0/1-10 MARY'S FEELINGS (78) M Hammond 8 10 8 ..... B Harding
6 0-3040 APOLLO'S DAUGHTER (18) J Goulding 11 10 6 ..... L Cooper (7)
– 6 declared –

Minimum weight: 10st. True handicap weight: Apollo's Daughter 9st 11lb.
BETTING: 7-4 Scotmail Lad, 5-2 Mary's Feelings, 9-2 King Pin, 11-2 Executive Design, 10-1 Shu Gaa, 16-1 Apollo's Daughter

FORM VERDICT
Scotmail Lad will be no pushover, but his front-running tactics could set things up for KING PIN. The top-weight has his share of temperament, but is racing over what is probably his optimum trip off a favourable mark. He should represent value.

3.30 HELMSLEY NOVICE HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS C) £8,000 added 2m

1 F3213 BALLESWHIDDEN (15) (CD) R Fahey 7 11 10 ..... E Callaghan
2 0U2F1 FOUNDRY LANE (37) (CD) Mrs M Reveley 8 11 8 ..... Mr A Dempsey (5)
3 22112 BARNBURGH BOY (11) (CD) T Easterby 5 11 7 ..... L Wyer
4 /42f3 HANG'EM OUT TO DRY (16) (D) E L James 8 10 7 ..... G Bradley
5 R/2521 CASTLETOWN COUNT (39) M W Easterby 7 10 6 ..... R Thornton
– 5 declared –

BETTING: 9-4 Foundry Lane, 5-2 Barnburgh Boy, 4-1 Hang'em Out To Dry, 11-2 Balleswhidden, Castletown Count

FORM VERDICT
FOUNDRY LANE has the potential to rate much higher than his current mark if his Flat and hurdles form is any guide, and though a question-mark against his jumping tempers confidence, he appears the likliest winner. Barnburgh Boy is narrowly preferred to Hang'em Out To Dry as the main danger.

4.00 HOECHST ROUSSEL 'NH' NOVICE HURDLE (D) £4,500 mares 2m 4f 110yds

1 454f1 JOWOODY (11) Mrs M Reveley 8 11 0 ..... G Lee
2 3-0143 KINGENNIE (67) (D) Mrs M Reveley 6 11 0 ..... P Niven
3 0-030 ASKRIGG VENTURE (92) M Hammond 6 10 7 ..... B Harding
4 0633-0 TRIPLE TRIUMPH (16) J Neville 6 10 7 ..... M A Fitzgerald
– 4 declared –

BETTING: 4-6 Jowoody, 5-2 Kingennie, 11-2 Askrigg Venture, 16-1 Triple Triumph

FORM VERDICT
JOWOODY, who has improved dramatically since joining Mary Reveley, was in front a long way out when completing her hat-trick and she should have enough speed to cope with the drop back in distance. Stable-companion Kingennie has disappointed since her Newcastle win, when she was a long way ahead of Askrigg Venture, but is the one for the forecast.

4.35 EAST KESWICK HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS C) £8,000 added 2m 4f 110yds

1 U-425U BRIGHTER SHADE (2) (CD) Mrs M Reveley 8 11 10 ..... P Niven
2 253042 GOLDEN HELLO (59) (C) T Easterby 8 11 9 ..... Mr A Dempsey (3)
3 00-3F4 BACK BAR (11) (D) D McCain 11 11 7 ..... A C Coyle (5)
4 620U3 HAG'S WAY (30) J H Johnson 9 10 7 ..... Mr J P McNamara (5) B
5 345P0U MONAUGHTY MAN (4) E Caine 13 10 0 ..... Mr O Fagan
– 5 declared –

Minimum weight: 10st. True handicap weight: Monaughty Man 9st 1lb.
BETTING: 9-4 Golden Hello, 9-4 Brighter Shade, Hag's Way, 10-1 Back Bar, 100-1 Monaughty Man.

FORM VERDICT
GOLDEN HELLO is the one to beat on the balance of his most recent form and has been found a good opportunity in this weakly-contested affair. Yesterday's Catterick exertions have to be a concern but, if recovered, he can see off Brighter Shade, who has struggled to find his form this season.

5.05 ASKHAM BRYAN HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS F) £3,000 added 2m

1 1-3F55 SILLY MONEY (39) (D) T Easterby 8 11 13 ..... L Wyer
2 232133 EASTERN PROJECT (18) (D) M Hammond 5 11 9 ..... B Harding
3 1-3001 MUTASARRIF (13) J Dodds 8 11 5 ..... S Melrose (7)
4 551P-4 SWANDALE FLYER (F44) N Bycroft 7 11 0 ..... G F Ryan (3)
5 043604 RANGER SLOANE (6) (D) G Fierro 7 11 0 ..... R Farrant
6 25-425 WYNYARD LADY (44) (D) Mrs M Reveley 8 10 10 ..... P Niven
7 055306 EARP (27) (D) F Murtagh 7 10 5 ..... A Dobbin 8
8 0-0604 COME AND RUN (62) M W Easterby 5 10 4 ..... C McCormack (3)
9 014600 ERINY (39) (D) J J Quinn 10 10 0 ..... A Maguire
– 9 declared –

BETTING: 7-2 Mutasarrif, 9-2 Eastern Project, 11-2 Wynyard Lady, 6-1 Ranger Sloane, 13-2 Silly Money, Swandale Flyer, 8-1 Earp, 14-1 others

FORM VERDICT
Earp, Ranger Sloane and Eriny are well handicapped on their best form, but preference is for EASTERN PROJECT, who has run well off his new mark since beaten by Crazy Horse and Scotmail Lad at Ayr. Silly Money could improve considerably on his last run over hurdles and is feared, along with Wynyard Lady, but the ground may be too soft for the much-improved Mutasarrif.

WOLVERHAMPTON

HYPERION

2.10 Tufamore 2.40 Elite Hope 3.10 Bold Effort 3.40 Baron De Pichon 4.10 Legal Venture 4.45 C-Harry 5.15 Law Dancer

GOING: Standard. STALLS: Inside, except 7f (outside).
DRAW ADVANTAGE: Low to middle best for 7f
■ Fibresand surface, left-hand, oval course.
■ Course is N of town on A449 (Wolverhampton station 1m.
ADMISSION: Club £15, Tattersalls £8 (£2 off for OAP members of Diamond Club). Restaurant package prices £17.50 to £35.95 including course entrance and meal CAR PARK: Free.

FIVE-YEAR STATISTICS
■ LEADING TRAINERS: R Hollinshead 69-577 (12%), N Littmoden 40-303 (13.4%), M Johnston 47-343 (13.9%), P Evans 41-404 (10.1%).
■ LEADING JOCKEYS: S Sanders 43-311 (13.8%), Dean McKeown 38-305 (12.5%), J Weaver 36-203 (17.7%), O Holland 31-133 (23.3%).
■ BUNKERED FIRST TIME: Nicholas Mistress, Habibi & Real Ting (entered 4.10).

2.10 'YOU MUST BE JOKING JULIA - HALF CENTURY' MAIDEN (D) £3,750 1m 100yds

1 0003-0 DANKA (51) K Ivory 5 9 12 ..... A Nicholls (5) 13 V
2 FRISKY SILK R Guest 5 9 7 ..... R Cochrane 6
3 420-77 ROUGE (16) (BF) J Berry 4 9 7 ..... Dean McKeown 9
4 CUMBRIAN BLUE T Easterby 3 9 5 ..... R Winston (3) 6
5 3-0 GOODBYE GOLDSTONE (33) (BF) T J Naughton 3 8 8 ..... F Norton 3
6 30 HETRA HAWK (123) W Musson 3 8 6 ..... R Price 1
7 02 MARTON MERE (10) T Easterby 3 8 5 ..... L Charnock 10
8 06 PRAIRIE WOLF (128) M Bell 3 8 8 ..... M Fenton 11
9 309620 STATE WIND (7) N Littmoden 3 8 6 ..... J Quinn 2 B
10 4 TUFAMORE (USA) (11) A Bates 3 8 6 ..... N Callan (5) 7
11 EVENING SCENT J Hetherton 3 8 3 ..... N Carlisle 4
12 54 FLOSSY (191) C Thornton 3 8 3 ..... Dale Gibson 5
13 5 GEVITY (126) G Lewis 3 8 3 ..... Martin Dwyer 12
– 13 declared –

BETTING: 9-4 Rouge, 9-2 Goodbye Goldstone, 6-1 State Wind, 8-1 Prairie Wolf, Tufamore, 10-1 Marton Mere, 12-1 Gevity, 16-1 others

FORM VERDICT
A couple of promising types from big yards in Gevity and Prairie Wolf but the percentage call is with the front-running ROUGE, who has solid handicap form at Southwell to her name and clearly has the ability to win a race of this nature.

2.40 LINDA & LESLEY NEARLY A CENTURY CLAIMING STAKES (F) (Div I) £2,750 7f

1 403112 ELITE HOPE (USA) (7) (CD) (BF) N Tinkler 7 9 2 ..... G Carter 8
2 040004 BEST QUEST (6) (D) K Burke 4 8 13 ..... N Callan (5) 5
3 22-45 DRYAD (28) (C) N Littmoden 4 8 12 ..... T G McLaughlin 4
4 0302-2 SAMWAR (25) (D) Mrs N Macauley 7 8 11 ..... P McCabe 2 V
5 05505- RON'S PET (46) (D) R Hannon 4 8 9 ..... P Fitzsimons (7) 0
6 22506- FOXIE LADY (134) P Murphy 4 8 8 ..... S Drowne 7
7 050-65 LANCASHIRE LEGEND (2) W Brisbourne 9 8 3 ..... P Bradley (7) 5
8 -05065 SING FOR ME (9) (C) R Hollinshead 4 7 12 ..... P M Quinn (7) 1
– 8 declared –

BETTING: 5-2 Samwar, 3-1 Elite Hope, 9-2 Best Quest, Foxie Lady, 7-1 Dryad, Ron's Pet, 20-1 Lancashire Legend, Sing For Me.

FORM VERDICT
Strictly at the weights ELITE HOPE has no easy task, but she has an excellent record here and will not go down without a fight. Best Quest has to prove himself here, while Samwar and Dryad are frustrating and both Ron's Pet and Foxie Lady have plenty to prove on their first taste of Fibresand.

3.10 TAURUS STAKES (CLASS C) £9,000 added 7f

1 66f214 ITALIAN SYMPHONY (4) (CD) P Evans 5 10 0 ..... C Cogan (7) 2 V
2 33162- DIAMOND WHITE (102) (D) P D'Arcy 4 9 8 ..... R Price 4
3 5000-1 BOLD EFFORT (15) (C) K C-Brown 7 9 4 ..... R Cochrane 1 B
4 003-11 WESTMAN'S WEIGH (21) (CD) R Hollinshead 6 9 4 ..... N Callan (5) 5
5 -04345 CLASSY CLEO (7) (BF) P Evans 4 8 13 ..... T G McLaughlin 6
6 14-112 FLYING OFFICER (27) (CD) (BF) Sir M Prescott 3 8 8 ..... T Sprake 3
– 6 declared –

BETTING: 6-4 Flying Officer, 4-1 Classy Cleo, 9-2 Westman's Weigh, 13-2 Diamond White, 7-1 Italian Symphony, 10-1 Bold Effort.

FORM VERDICT
No easy task at the weights for FLYING OFFICER, but this return to 7f will suit and he is likely to be able to dictate proceedings. Classy Cleo may give him most to do.

3.40 LEO HANDICAP (CLASS C) £10,000 added 1m 1f 79yds

1 2561-0 WEET-A-MINUTE (49) (CD) R Hollinshead 6 10 9 ..... A Culhane 7
2 1000- TEMERAIRE (USA) (465) R Ingram 4 9 4 ..... A Clark 5
3 -2465 SUALTACH (7) (CD) R Hollinshead 6 9 4 ..... N Callan (5) 3
4 -1012 THEKRYAATI (16) (CD) (BF) M Johnston 4 8 7 ..... G Carter 4
5 233463 KING PRIAM (7) M Polglase 4 8 1 ..... A Nicholls (5) 2 B
6 11121 BARON DE PICHON (9) (C) N Littmoden 3 7 10 (6ex) J Quinn 1
7 341121 HIGH NOON (7) (CD) N Littmoden 4 7 12 (6ex) ..... J Tate 6
– 7 declared –

BETTING: 3-1 Thekryaati, 100-30 Baron De Pichon, High Noon, 8-1 Weet-A-Minute, 7-1 King Priam, 10-1 Sualtach, Temeraire

FORM GUIDE
Weet-A-Minute: Broke a long losing run with 3½ length win over Byzantium from 7lb lower over C&D in Dec, but well beaten off this mark since. Capable of bold bid if in the mood
Temeraire: Failed to build on early-season Lingfield and Windsor turf wins and once sold for 78,000gns. Some promise on Fibresand debut behind Refuse To Lose here in Nov, but beaten over hurdles since and may need further experience of surface
Sualtach: Unreliable six-time course winner. Beaten twice off this mark since 2-length win from 7lb lower over C&D in Jan and probably weighted up to best now.
Thekryaati: Raised 8lb for 3 lengths C&D win over Taliteh Belle last month and just caught by Bank On Him over 1m2f at Lingfield latest. Should be a major factor, although shorter trip and another 1lb rise could be hard to overcome
King Priam: Proving hard to place on AW and looked a shade reluctant when 1½ length 3rd to High Noon from this mark over C&D latest
Baron De Pichon: Progressed again with 2-length win over Lincoln Dean here(1m). Could struggle under 6lb penalty, though longer trip will help
High Noon: Comfortably defied 3lb rise to beat Prospector's Cove over C&D for 3rd win in last 4 starts. Tough task up in grade with 6lb penalty
VERDICT: The could rest between the prolific scorers THEKRYAATI, Baron De Pichon and High Noon. The Nick Littmoden pair are both looking to defy penalties earned in lower grade, and they could find the steadily improving Thekryaati difficult to peg back if Gary Carter gets a lead into the straight.

4.10 AQUARIUS SELLING HANDICAP (CLASS G) £2,500 added 3YO 5f

1 006348 DOLLY DAY DREAM (11) K Ivory 9 7 ..... Martin Dwyer 2 B
2 05-043 LEGAL VENTURE (14) (D) N Littmoden 8 7 7 G McLaughlin 7 B
3 002-05 DAVID (25) Miss G Kelleway 9 5 ..... P Fredericks (5) 11
4 4000-6 PASHA (21) Miss J Craze 9 4 ..... S Webster 12 B
5 -43265 NICHOLAS MISTRESS (4) P Evans 9 1 ..... N Callan (5) 13 V
6 0005-5 WEETRAIN (11) J Given 9 1 ..... J Fanning 1
7 0060-0 GREY STRIKE (28) J Berry 8 11 ..... P Fessey 5 B
8 0-0002 SOUNDS LUCKY (2) N Littmoden 8 11 ..... C Carver (5) 8
9 35-255 STUTTON GAL (12) J Wharton 8 10 ..... F Norton 9 B
10 600- COSMIC ALTITUDE (151) A Newcombe 8 8 ..... J Quinn 8
11 560-06 HABIBI (12) Mrs N Macauley 8 8 ..... P McCabe 4 V
12 000- REAL THIG (152) P Evans 8 1 ..... J Tate 10 V
13 46-6 ANOTHER LOVER (18) B Knight 7 12 ..... A Polli (3) 8
– 13 declared –

BETTING: 9-2 Legal Venture, 5-1 David, 6-1 Sounds Lucky, 7-1 Weetrain, 8-1 Dolly Day Dream, Habibi, Nicholas Mistress, Stutton Gal, 10-1 Pasha, 16-1 others

FORM VERDICT
WEETRAIN, who gives the impression she will be suited by the drop in trip, went well enough in a 6f maiden here last month to suggest she handles the surface and she is now potentially well handicapped. Dolly Day Dream may find this on the sharp side but should run well.

4.45 LINDA & LESLEY NEARLY A CENTURY CLAIMING STAKES (F) (Div II) £2,750 7f

1 00-223 TROJAN HERO (7) (CD) Mrs M Reveley 6 9 1 ..... A Culhane 1
2 -1264 C-HARRY (7) (CD) R Hollinshead 5 6 13 ..... R Cochrane 6
3 000/0 MELASUS (23) (D) D Arbuthnot 7 6 11 ..... S Whitworth 2
4 -00314 ABTAAL (2) (D) Mrs N Macauley 9 8 9 ..... P McCabe 5 V
5 /505-0 MARIUA (16) Miss G Kelleway 4 6 8 ..... R Ffrench 4
6 005-05 ED'S FOLLY (11) L A Dace 6 8 7 ..... R Thomas (7) 7 B
7 512000 FAYIM (7) (CD) Miss S Wilton 5 8 9 ..... C Carver (5) 8
8 043000 AMINGTON GIRL (7) P Evans 4 7 12 ..... J Quinn 6 B
– 8 declared –

BETTING: 5-2 Trojan Hero, 11-4 C-Harry, 4-1 Abtaal, 9-2 Fayim, 13-2 Melasus, 10-1 Mariua, 12-1 Ed's Folly, 14-1 Amington Girl

FORM VERDICT
This is likely to resolve itself into a battle between TROJAN HERO and C-Harry who are closely weighted on last week's form. The former again has the low draw to make the running.

5.15 'LESLEY'S 48 TODAY YEARS NOT CIGS' HANDICAP (E) £3,500 added 1m 4f

1 5500-4 KIERANS BRIDGE (21) (CD) A Jarvis 4 8 10 ..... L Newton 9
2 255344 NOUKARI (7) (D) P Evans 6 8 8 ..... T G McLaughlin 1
3 -21620 ABULLIJOOD (5) (CD) M Waring 4 9 6 ..... R Price 4 B
4 14304- JALB (449) (D) P Murphy 5 9 5 ..... S Drowne 2
5 50-501 COLONEL CUSTER (9) J Pearce 4 8 1 (6ex) ..... G Bardwell 6
6 2400-1 LAW DANCER (6) (C) (D) T Mills 8 8 11 ..... Lisa Hackett (7) 7
7 6000-4 HILL FARM DANCER (11) (C) W Brisbourne 8 8 8 P Bradley (7) 3
8 -05455 CZAR WARS (9) P Dalton 4 7 10 ..... J Quinn 5
9 443-50 QUIBBLING (47) K Cornford 5 7 10 ..... P Fessey 8 V
– 9 declared –

Minimum weight: 7st 10lb. True handicap weight: Quibbling 8st 13lb.
BETTING: 3-1 Law Dancer, 4-1 Colonel Custer, 6-1 Noukari, 8-1 Jalb, 7-1 Kierans Bridge, 8-1 Czar Wars, 10-1 Abulljood, 14-1 others

FORM VERDICT
There were signs of a resurgence from Hill Farm Dancer on her reappearance, while Colonel Custer is not fully exposed over middle distances. But LAW DANCER won nicely on his reappearance at Lingfield last week, escapes a penalty for that success and is arguably a better performer here.

Oxford have to be wary of Laird

HOCKEY

BY BILL COLWILL

OXFORD, WHO play in the National League, are favourites to add to their 37 wins in the 99th Varsity match hut Cambridge, who lead the way with 45 victories, have had a good season and are mounting a strong challenge for National status.

The threat to Oxford at the Milton Keynes National Stadium next Tuesday will come from the double Oxford Blue Adam Laird, who after three years of National League experience with East Grinstead, arrived at Cambridge last October and immediately started scoring goals.

Averaging more than two in each of Cambridge's league games, he could be the difference between the sides. Another Cambridge talent with league experience is Steve Gray.

Oxford, led by their South African captain, David Eadie, will be looking to their England Under-21 World Cup striker Tom Matthews to provide the goals. Matthews, along with Tim Johnson, both winning their third Blue along with Eadie, could provide the edge. Cambridge edged home 2-1 winners in last year's women's game. The match turned on a lively performance from Tammy Nancoo, who played for Trinidad and Tobago in last year's Commonwealth Games and the Cambridge captain, Liz Ellwood, a stalwart in defence.

Cambridge: M Harris; P Ourram; P Dodd, R Hudson (capt), S Gray; G Weir, A Cotton, I McClive, T Grusiin; A Laird, J Costelloe. **Substitutes:** R Wilcock, T Damek, N Campbell, J Craven, S Deadman.
Oxford (from): C Andrews, N Timson, E Bevan, W Whitworth, N Pirihi, O Eadie (capt), P Atkinson, T Johnson, A Gough, T Matthews, M Darbon, J Pilch, M Mayer, P Baker, T Palmer, T Perry.
Cambridge women: C Wright, E Ellwood (capt), R Meredith, F Panizza, J Belcher, M Sherlock, R Joyner, H Mansfield, H Coles, J Doble, T Nancoo, N Redpath, E Anelay, E Kirschen, H Dent, A MacDonald.
Oxford women: R Illingworth, N Orringe, S Mackie, C McKenna (capt), K Hampson, G Traub, V Pope, J Broers, E Kingstone, N Jacobsen, H Brooks, J Connell, R White, A Sherwood, B Watts, S Baker.

European Cup quarter-final: Italian clubs have usually had the upper hand on some pulsating nights of action

History not on United's side

BY GUY HODGSON

EVEN BERTI VOGTS, the erstwhile manager of Germany, has been making optimistic sounds about Manchester United's chances of winning the European Cup this season and the city itself is electric with optimistic anticipation, but a note of caution ought to be sounded.

United meet Internazionale tonight and precedent does not coincide with the confident noises. They have won the Champions and the Cup-Winners' Cups and have been playing in Europe for more than 40 years, but not once have they prevailed in a two-legged tie against an Italian side.

Four times United have gone out to Italian clubs and even in their encounters with Juventus in the Champions' League in 1996 and 1997 they would have lost had the oormal knock-out rules applied. Spaghetti Junction, in their case, has led to an exit.

Where United have failed, others have succeeded although the balance remains in the Latins' favour. There have been exciting Anglo-Italian nights and one, Heysel, so dreadful football recoiled in shame.

To dwell on the positive, here are memorable ties from the five decades of European club competition when England's finest have met Italy'a with mixed results.

Clockwise (from top left): Alan Smith scores Arsenal's winner against Parma in the 1994 Cup-Winners' Cup final; Juventus' Claudio Gentile has the npper hand on Manchester United's Frank Stapleton in the 1984 Cup-Winners' semi-final; Tottenham's Alan Gilzean challenges Milan's Fabio Cudicini in the 1972 Uefa Cup semi-final; Ian St John nets Liverpool's third against Inter in the 1965 European Cup semi-final; Manchester United's Dennis Viollet scores against Milan in the 1958 European Cup semi-final
Allsport/Hulton Getty/Mirror/Topham Picturepoint

1958

European Cup semi-final
Manchester Utd 2 Milan 1
Milan 4 Manchester Utd 0
(Milan won 5-2 on aggregate)

Five days after United had lost the FA Cup final to Bolton, three months after Munich and the football world could not have done more for the club. Apart from England and Milan that is.

With insensitivity that beggars belief even at a distance of 40 years, England insisted Bobby Charlton went on a pre-World Cup tour and missed out on a semi-final that had been gained by the last act of the team destroyed in the crash. With him United might have done enough in the first leg, without him there was little hope.

"I think we had ruo out of emotional steam," recalled Bill Foulkes, a United defender for 21 years, but there was still enough there for Ernie Taylor to win the first match with a penalty 11 minutes from time after Dennis Viollet had been fouled by a future Italian manager, Cesare Maldini.

"I have never seen a crowd set alight with the flame of victory as this Old Trafford," Terence Elliott of the *Daily Express* wrote, but resentment also hurned in the Milan players who disliked United's robust tackling and the award of what they judged an unfair penalty.

The price was paid in Milan, where they were bombarded with vegetables thrown from the crowd. "I remember being hit by cabbages and the biggest bunch of carrots I've ever seen," Foulkes said. "They hurt, too."

So did the tackles, and United were brushed aside by a combination of brute force, a lenient referee and the brilliance of Milan's £75,000 (then an astonishing sum) Uruguayan centre-forward Schiaffino, who scored twice.

"It was a terrible experience," Foulkes said. "Milan had a good team and they crushed us in the second half. Most of us were glad in the end to settle for 4-0."

1965

European Cup semi-final
Liverpool 3 Internazionale 1
Internazionale 3 Liverpool 0
(Inter won 4-3 on aggregate)

In his autobiography Bill Shankly described the second leg as "a war" and one that left the defeated army bitter that they had been cheated. The first match though was one of the great Anfield nights.

Liverpool had won at Wembley on the Saturday and Shankly, never one to miss out on propaganda, got the injured Gerry Byrne and Gordon Milne to parade the FA Cup round the ground as Inter, the world and European champions, took the field.

That whipped up an already excited 54,000 crowd who within 11 minutes saw Roger Hunt score and Mazzola equalise. Ian Callaghan restored the lead and Ian St John made it a two-goal margin so that by the end the Kop was singing "Oh Inter, one, two, three. Go back to Italy" to the tune of "Santa Lucia".

The smiles of that night soon ended in the San Siro. A church bell tolled opposite the Liverpool hotel disturbing the players' sleep and the game itself had a horrible atmosphere with rockets raining down on the visitors.

"As for the referee," the Liverpool captain, Ron Yeats, recalled, "he signalled an indirect free-kick and when the ball went straight into the net he gave a goal. The second came after the ball had been kicked out of Tommy Lawrence's hands. The third goal was fair enough, but what a way to win a match."

Shankly had believed Liverpool would be the first English club to win the European Cup that year but swallowed his disappointment. "See what you've done," he told his players as they listened to the extravagant celebrations, "these people are going mad because they're so pleased to beat Liverpool. That's the standard you have raised yourselves to."

1972

Uefa Cup semi-final
Tottenham 2 Milan 1
Milan 1 Tottenham 1
(Tottenham won 3-2 on aggregate)

When Alex Ferguson complains of fixture congestion refer him to this. Tottenham played oo Good Friday, Saturday and Easter Monday and by the time their weary players faced Milan it was their fourth game in six days.

Bill Nicholson needed every resource he had and Alan Mullery, who was on loan to Fulham and seemingly on his way out of White Hart Lane, was recalled to replace John Pratt, who had broken his nose. It would prove an inspired decision.

The first leg has gone down in north London legend as Steve Perryman's match. He would go on to make 655 League appearances for Spurs and was still playing for the club 14 years later, but it was for this game, at the age of 20, that he is fondly remembered.

Milan had taken the lead through Benetti on the counter and Tottenham's attack, understandably given the hard labour, was weary and predictable. Then Perryman struck with an opportunist shot from the edge of the penalty area.

At 1-1 and time running out the result was still favourable to Milan, but Perryman would strike again even more extravagantly. Mullery's corner was cleared, but be caught the ball on the bounce and from 35 yards volleyed into the far coroer.

At the San Siro the tie was put further out of reach of the Italians within seven minutes. Perryman made to shoot but passed instead to Mullery, whose effort on the run curved high round the Milan goalkeeper. It would prove the decisive goal.

"You played a real team game," Eddie Bailey, Nicholson's assistant, shouted with delight as the players returned to the dressing-room. "That's great," Martin Peters replied before turning to his rarely satisfied manager. "Now I want to bear Bill say the same."

The board had promised the players' wives, who had not been in Milan, they would definitely travel for the two-legged final and they kept their word. They went to Wolverhampton.

1984

European Cup-Winners' Cup semi-final
Manchester Utd 1 Juventus 1
Juventus 2 Manchester Utd 1
(Juventus won 3-2 on aggregate)

They still sell videos at Old Trafford of the game that got United into the semi-finals, a pulsating 3-0 win over a Barcelona team which included Maradona and who bad established a 2-0 first-leg lead. The euphoria of that night bad dissipated two weeks later, however, because Bryan Robson and Arnold Muhreo were injured and Ray Wilkins suspended so the midfield that had to take on Michel Platini *et al* included two defenders, Paul McGrath and John Gidman.

"I could only say to the lads 'run your guts out and fight for every ball then it might just happen for us,'" remembers Ron Atkinson, then the United manager, and that looked even less likely when Paulo Rossi got a deflected goal after a quarter of an hour.

Alan Davies, who would tragically commit suicide in the Nineties, equalised 10 minutes before half-time and when Norman Whiteside did the same in the second leg in Turin Atkinson believed a famous victory would be his.

"It was the first goal the Italians bad conceded on their own ground in the competition and I thought at that stage we were stronger and fitter. If we had made it to extra time I think we'd have run them off their feet."

Instead, with a minute to go Zbigniew Boniek rolled the ball into Rossi's stride and he won the match for Juventus with a low shot past Gary Bailey'a left hand.

"Rossi showed why be was one of the most accomplished goalscorers in the world," Atkinson said. "But I still think if we'd had a full squad for the two legs we'd have beeo in the final."

1994

European Cup Winners' Cup final
Arsenal 1 Parma 0

They sing anthems at Highbury to results like this but few one-nils are as cherished. Anfield '89 may have books and films based on it, but a sound argument could be made for picking this as the finest hour and a half of George Graham's Gunners.

Arsenal's Premiership season had fizzled out into two wins in eight matches and when Ian Wright, who scored 34 goals that season, had to miss the Copenhagen final along with John Jensen, David Hillier and Martin Keown their prospects against the holders and overwhelming favourites were not promising.

The Parma team looked formidable then but subsequent familiarity has added to their lustre because the Italian side that night included Gianfranco Zola, Faustino Asprilla and Tomas Brolin. Deprived of his leading scorer and his ball-winning grafters, Graham adopted a 4-5-1 formation with splendidly stoic results.

Brolin hit a post in an early Italian flurry but once this storm had been weathered Arsenal calmly wrested control and took the lead after 20 minutes. Alan Smith, the lone striker, pounced on an extravagant failed attempt at an overhead clearance by Lorenzo Minotti and ran on to shoot past Luca Bucci via the post.

The Italians withdrew Pin, their principal midfielder, with 20 minutes remaining the battle had been won. "Tactically and technically we did not function," Nevio Scala, the Parma manager, said. "This was because Arsenal were the better team." Sweet words on a sweet-

Dynamo set real test for Toshack

BY MARK BURTON

JOHN TOSHACK'S track record at the Santiago Bernabeu stadium will hearten Real Madrid when they face Dynamo Kiev in tonight's European Cup quarter-final first leg. During his first 17-month spell with the club, Real were unbeaten at home, winning 28 of their 31 matches under the Welshman.

Toshack may bring back the playmaker Fernando Redondo, who last played a competitive game 10 weeks ago. The Argentinian has been out of action with a knee injury, but be was passed fit at the weekend. "He's a specialist in a very difficult position but Redondo is the key to everything," Toshack said.

In a training session on Monday, Toshack indicated that be was only likely to make two changes to the team that started in the 3-2 defeat at Real Betis on Saturday. Jaime Sanchez is expected to make way for Redondo while an injury to Aitor Karanka means that either Manuel Sanchis or Fernando Sanz will come into the ceotre of the defence.

Dynamo Kiev for their part must over come the traditional hangover often suffered by teams from the former Soviet Union after their long winter break. In last season's European Cup, Dynamo were far less impressive when falling to Juventus in the quarter-finals than they had been in the group stage. This year, to combat the lack of match practice, Dynamo have been training in the warmer climes of Israel for several weeks and playing a number of friendlies.

In contrast to the brilliant individuals of Real, Dynamo's strength is teamwork, with the Ukrainian international strikers, Serhiy Rebrov and Andriy Shevchenko, as focal points.

If current form, injury worries and pedigree tell the story, then tonight's all-German quarter-final between Bayern Munich and Kaiserslautern will be one-sided. Bayern warmed up for the first leg, at their Olympic stadium home, with a 4-0 demolition of Hansa Rostock which lifted them 12 points clear of second-placed Bayer Leverkusen at the top of the *Bundesliga*.

The Bavarians, who won three straight European titles from 1974 to 1976, will be at full strength as their only doubtful starter, the midfielder Mario Basler, has recovered from influenza and is fit to play.

Kaiserslautern, third in the League, could only manage a 1-1 draw with VfB Stuttgart on Friday and will miss several key players, most notably their striker Olaf Marschall, who has a sore knee.

Juventus, undefeated in three *Serie A* matches under their new coach, Carlo Ancelotti, hope to take a big step towards their fourth successive European Cup final when they face Olympiakos Piraeus of Greece in their quarter-final first leg at their Delle Alpi stadium.

Out of the title race, the Italian champions are counting on the Cup to salvage a season in which they have been undermined by injuries to key players such as Alessandro Del Piero and Filippo Inzaghi.

While Del Piero is out for the season with knee ligament damage, Juve will welcome back Inzaghi, who is set to make his first start since injuring his knee oo 10 January.

Irish choose physical approach

RUGBY UNION

BY CHRIS HEWETT

SO NOW we know: the Irish are taking the route one, back-to-basics, hellfire and brimstooe approach to this weekend's Five Nations set to with England.

Warren Gatland, their coach, tacitly admitted as much last night when he dropped the pacey; multi-faceted Eric Miller from his back row and chose Victor Costello instead. As a statement of intent, it was deafening. Gatland intends to take the word "vicarage" out of the forthcoming tea party and replace it with the word "Boston".

A shovel-handed 18st 3lb man mountain from Blackrock – he went to the 1992 Barcelona Olympics as a shot-putter – Costello has many qualities; not every No 8 experiences the pleasure of catching Jeremy Guscott in full flight, as the Lesterman did at Twickenham last season. But subtlety is hardly one of the more prominent strings attached to the Costello bow. His selection over Miller, whose brilliance made him the youngest of Martin Johnson's 1997 Lions, underlines Gatland's preference for the physical over the artistic.

Miller will be desperately disappointed. Two stones lighter than Costello but infinitely more versatile, he made more yardage during Ireland's fine victory over Wales at Wembley 11 days ago than the average gridiroo running back, and covered more acreage than an entire team-full of Costellos could ever dream about.

Still, the emerald die is cast: it will be full-on and damn the consequences on Saturday.

Gatland has made a second, more widely predicted change to his winning side of two weekends ago. Girvan Dempsey, a clubmate of Miller's at Terenure College, regains the left wing berth from Nial Woods, who drops down a level and plays in the second-string A international between the two countries at Donnybrook on Saturday night.

Whether the Irish will rue the absence of Woods' goal-kicking skills remains to be seen. They paid the price of his omission against France in the opening match of the championship, so it is a risky strategy.

England were scheduled to confirm their line-up this afternoon and Costello's inclusion may just persuade Clive Woodward, the national coach, to shine his selectorial torch in the direction of the back row.

Martin Corry, a titan for Leicester this season, has the right physical equipment to confront the Irish No 8. The most imaginative solution would be to restore the equally powerful Richard Hill to his open-side role, run Lawrence Dallaglio on the blind side and use Neil Back as a 25-minute "impact" player once the game has broken up a little.

Woodward is unlikely to do any such thing. He has been concentrating on the choices at full-back and scrum-half: if be picks on form, be will recall both Matt Perry and Kyran Bracken. Perry is a magnificent defensive full-back – witness his performance against the Springboks in Cape Town last summer – while Bracken is the best No 9 in Europe. Given the latter's injury record, Woodward should play him while he can.

John Davies will play for Wales in Saturday's encounter with France in Paris. An arm injury may eject Scotland's captain, Gary Armstrong, from the Italy game at Murrayfield.

Wasps' Tetley's Bitter Cup semi-final with Gloucester has been moved to Sunday, 4 April.

IRELAND (v England, Five Nations' Championship, Lansdowne Road, Saturday, 6 March): C O'Shea (London Irish); J Bishop (London Irish), K Maggs (Bath), J Bell (Dungannon), G Dempsey (Terenure College); D Humphreys (Dungannon), C McGuinness (St Mary's College); P Clohessy (Young Munsterr), K Wood (Harlequins), P Wallace (Saracens), P Johns (Saracens, capt), J Davidson (Castres), D O'Cuinneagain (Sale), A Ward (Ballynahinch), V Costello (St Mary's College). **Replacements:** R Henderson (Wasps), E Elwood (Galwegians), C Scally (UCD), E Miller (Terenure College), N Galwey (Shannon), J Fitzpatrick (Dungannon), R Nesdale (Newcastle).

TODAY'S FIXTURES

FOOTBALL
7.30 unless stated

EUROPEAN CUP QUARTER-FINALS FIRST-LEG
Bayern Munich v Kaiserslautern (7.45)
Juventus v Olympiakos (7.45)
Man Utd v Internazionale (7.45)
Real Madrid v Dynamo Kiev (7.45)

FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP
Sheff Wed v Wimbledon (7.45)

NATIONWIDE FOOTBALL LEAGUE FIRST DIVISION
Barnsley v Bradford (7.45)
QPR v Oxford Utd (7.45)
Swindon v Tranmere (7.45)

TENNENTS SCOTTISH CUP FOURTH ROUND
Clydebank v Dundee Utd (at Stirling FC)

SCOTTISH LEAGUE THIRD DIVISION: Postponed: Dumbarton v Cowdenbeath.

RYMAN LEAGUE Premier Division: Dag enham & Redbridge v Hampton (7.45). **First Division:** Croydon v Maidenhead Utd; Molesey v Chertsey.

DR MARTENS LEAGUE Southern Division: St Leonards v Corby.

UNIBOND LEAGUE CUP Second-round replay: Hucknall v Emley (at Emley FC).

PRESS & JOURNAL HIGHLAND LEAGUE: Deveronvale v Peterhead (8.0); Fort William v Clachnacuddin; Fraserburgh v Keith (8.0); Huntly v Buckie Thistle.

LEAGUE OF WALES Gilbert League Cup semi-final: Postponed: Caernarfon Town v Bangor City.

NORTHERN COUNTIES EAST LEAGUE CUP Third-round replay: Garforth v Thackley. **Fourth round:** Arnold v North Ferriby; Ossett Albion v Denaby; Selby v Ossett Town.

WINSTONLEAD KENT LEAGUE Premier Division: VCD Athletic v Deal.

UNIJET SUSSEX COUNTY LEAGUE First Division: Eastbourne Town v Hassocks.

SCREWFIX DIRECT LEAGUE Premier Division: Elmore v Barnstaple; Chippenham v Odd Down.

PONTINS LEAGUE Premier Division: Leicester v Birmingham (7.0). **First Division:** Burnley v Manchester City (7.15); Grimsby v Port Vale (7.0); West Bromwich v Coventry (7.0) (at Halesowen Town FC); Wolverhampton v Bolton (7.0). **Second Division:** Lincoln v Scarborough (2.0); Notts County v Wrexham (2.0). **Third Division:** Chester v Walsall (2.0); Chesterfield v Wigan (2.0); Hartlepool v Bury (7.0); Rochdale v Darlington (2.0). **League Cup quarter-final:** Stockport v York (7.0) (at Hyde Utd FC).

AVON INSURANCE COMBINATION First Division: Barnet v Watford (at Letchworth FC); Bournemouth v Northampton (2.0); Colchester v Gillingham (2.0); Southampton v Peterborough; Wimbledon v Cambridge; Wycombe v Brentford (2.0); Tottenham v Portsmouth (at St Albans FC); West Ham v Millwall (2.0).

RUGBY LEAGUE

NORTHERN FORD PREMIERSHIP: Postponed: Oldham v Featherstone.

RUGBY UNION

REPRESENTATIVE MATCHES: East Midlands v Barbarians (3.0); North Midlands v RAF (7.30) (at Worcester RFC).

CLUB MATCHES: Cambridge University v Penguins (7.15); Oxford University v Oxfordshire (7.30); Rosslyn Park v Royal Navy (7.30).

BASKETBALL

BUDWEISER LEAGUE: Derby Storm v Leicester Riders (8.0).

ICE HOCKEY

SEKONDA SUPERLEAGUE: Ayr Scottish Eagles v Newcastle Riverkings (7.30).

TODAY'S NUMBER

19.5m

The amount in dollars (£12m) that Vinny Testaverde, of the New York Jets, will earn over the next three years

هكذا من الاصل

Signori strikes set up Bologna

FOOTBALL

BY DERRICK WHYTE

GIUSEPPE SIGNORI, the former Italian international striker, scored twice as Bologna beat Lyon 3-0 last night to stand on the brink of their first Uefa Cup semi-final.

Signori put his side ahead with an acrobatic volley after five minutes, and he made it 2-0 similarly early in the second half with a low first time left-foot strike from 15 metres. The diminutive former Lazio forward turned provider in the 54th minute, setting up the midfielder Jonatan Binotto for Bologna's third goal, which made the quarter-final, first leg safe.

The Italians, who qualified for the competition via the Intertoto Cup and have not reached the semi-finals of a European competition since 1968, sat back in the final 20 minutes to protect their commanding lead ahead of the second leg in France in a fortnight's time.

A football agent told a French court yesterday that he helped Bordeaux with attempts to bribe referees with offers of gifts and girls before European competition matches in the 1980s.

Ljubomir Barin, a Croat, is one of four men on trial charged with fraud and bribery. The other three are the French club's ex-general manager, its former secretary-general and another agent.

At the continuing trial, Barin said he had offered his services to the then Bordeaux president, Claude Bez, who died last year, after the club "got robbed" by a refereeing decision in a European Cup match against Hamburg in 1981. After that he had received 500,000 francs (£60,000) ahead of each European match to ensure there was no repeat. The court is trying to discover what happened to 4.2m francs pent by the club between 1983 and 1988.

Barin said yesterday: "Bordeaux would offer fur coats, shirts, gifts for the kids. Sometimes girls, I don't deny it. There were sometimes three or four of them."

But the club's former secretary-general, Hervé Bizot, said the money was not meant to bribe referees but "to create a favourable environment around them".

France's two most famous referees, Michel Vautrot and Joel Quiniou, both testified it was the custom for referees to be offered gifts at European matches. But Vautrot said that was "after the games and in the presence of the Uefa delegate. They were gifts bearing the team's colours, nothing else."

Barin said no such practices took place any longer.

Celtic's captain, Tom Boyd, said he and his fellow defenders are desperate to keep Alan Stubbs at the club, although eh accepts that is the English centre-back is unhappy north of the border then it will be difficult for the club to persuade him to stay in Glasgow. Aston Villa are thought to be leading the chase for his signature.

Bologna's Jonathan Binotto (left) tussles for possession with Lyon's David Linares during yesterday's Uefa Cup quarter-final in Bologna AFP

Di Canio absence accepted by FA

THE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION has accepted Paolo Di Canio's excuse for missing a meeting with its compliance officer, Graham Bean. The West Ham striker was due to meet with Bean, the FA's "sleaze buster", yesterday to discuss his recent outburst against Paul Alcock, the referee, but has instead returned home to Italy to visit a sick relative.

Di Canio accused Alcock of feigning stress since being pushed to the ground by the Italian in a match in September. However, the FA has accepted Di Canio's reason for missing the meeting and its spokesman, Steve Double, said: "The meeting has been rescheduled for one day next week. We understand that he will be back in this country at the end of the week."

Dion Dublin, the Aston Villa forward, will miss the Premiership match with Tottenham at White Hart Lane on 13 March through suspension. Dublin will have to serve a one-match ban after collecting his fifth yellow card of the season in Saturday's home defeat against Coventry City.

Olivier Dacourt, the Everton midfielder, has been suspended for two games as of yesterday and fined £1,000 for reaching 11 bookings this season. Dacourt will miss the FA Cup quarter-final tie at Newcastle on Sunday, and the Premiership visit to Blackburn a week today. Silvio Maric, the Newcastle midfielder, could make his debut in that FA Cup quarter-final on Sunday, despite the fact that the 23-year-old Croatian has not played in more than six weeks. Maric completed his £3.5m move to Tyneside last week, but the mid-season break in Croatia means he is short of match fitness.

Emile Heskey, Leicester City's striker, is to see a specialist to determine the extent of his long-term back prohlem. The England Under-21 forward has been dogged by the problem for several months and again had to be substituted in Monday night's bome Premiership meeting with Leeds.

The Fifa president, Sepp Blatter, has said harmonising the international calendar could not be achieved before 2005, making 2009 the first year in which his planned biennial World Cup could be staged. "We want to have a master calendar, but it is possible only after 2004. Contracts have already been signed for competitions," Blatter said in Zurich yesterday. "We could start in 2005."

Blatter accepted it would also not be possible to stage a World Cup in 2008 because the Olympic Games and the Confederations Cup would be beld that year, leaving 2009 as the first viable year.

O'Leary aims to start new era at Leeds

DAVID O'LEARY is poised to sign a new five-year contract with Leeds United and be has set his sights on the Yorkshire club becoming a force to rival Manchester United, Chelsea and Arsenal.

O'Leary said that the Leeds chairman, Peter Ridsdale, had offered him the new deal last week and insisted: "I would love to stay and there are no problems with signing the contract from my point of view."

It will earn the former Republic of Ireland player a pay increase as a reward for steering Leeds into the top four of the Premiership and in developing youngsters such as Jonathon Woodgate and Alan Smith.

Now O'Leary is banking on Ridsdale and the board of directors giving him the necessary funds to bring in the quality players he feels are required to push Leeds onto the next rung of the ladder and be a League-challenging force.

"When I took over I tore up my old contract and bad a pay rise, but the agreement was that I was working on the basis of having the two and a half years to go of my old deal. The club wanted to see what I could do. Now they want me to take the club on for the next five years and I am delighted," O'Leary said.

O'Leary's side gave another demonstration of their potential when they won 2-1 at Leicester on Monday, but he knows there is still much work to be done before the club can claim to be part of the élite. "The aim is to be able to challenge for the League over the next few years. There is quality in the current squad, but we are not in that position yet," O'Leary said.

"I want to buy quality, the people who will take us on for the next few years and get us up there in terms of squad quality. Hopefully I will get the backing to do that. Only time will tell on that issue."

Meanwhile, Leeds are to put forward detailed plans for the development of their Elland Road stadium after the Government gave the go-ahead to the club's expansion plan.

David Batty made his comeback for Leeds in a reserve match at Derby last night after three months on the sidelines with a rib injury. Batty, a £4.5m signing from Newcastle, was taken off in the first half of his second Leeds debut against Coventry in December and has been out of action since.

'I don't want England job,' says Venables

THE FORMER England coach Terry Venables has ruled out a return to the job once Kevin Keegan's four-match reign comes to an end in June.

Speaking for the Football Association, Noel White said last week: "We will look at certain names put before us and Terry's will almost certainly be among those."

But Venables has snubbed that olive branch from the man viewed as one of the key men behind his departure from the post in 1996.

Venables said: "It's too late now. I am no longer interested in the job. I think the FA would have let Keegan have anything to take the job – just as long as it wasn't me.

"I've not spoken to anybody at the FA about it. They didn't ask me if I wanted it in the beginning. If they had, I would have said yes. But I'm not interested now."

IOC disputes accusation of 'flourishing' corruption

OLYMPIC GAMES

A SENIOR official from the International Olympic Committee yesterday disputed an American ethics panel's contention that the committee fostered a "culture of improper gift giving" that led to corruption in the bidding process for the 2002 Salt Lake City Winter Games.

The US Olympic Committee panel levelled most of the blame for the Salt Lake City vote-buying controversy at the IOC. The report said the conduct "tolerated by the IOC is potentially illegal and inevitably corruptive". It also suggested leaders ignored corruption that was "flourishing". The report accused the IOC of creating the atmosphere responsible for the improper inducements, which have seen nine IOC members either sacked or resign.

However, Kevan Gosper, an IOC executive board member from Australia, said the report failed to acknowledge that since 1987 the committee has had rules on gifts and travel related to the bidding process.

"It's quite unacceptable to say that the IOC has created an environment which has enabled gift giving and rewards to run out of control," Gosper said. "I take strong objection to that. We have rules and we have constantly refined those rules. An organisation like ours relies on candidate cities and IOC members to comply with those rules. If they had, we wouldn't have had the problems we did in Salt Lake City."

Gosper conceded, however, that IOC leaders should have done more to enforce the rules. "We haven't sufficiently pursued the compliance in terms of IOC members and the candidate cities," he said.

Drug test sought for Sydney

ATHLETICS

AUSTRALIAN ATHLETES will be injected with a banned performance-enhancing drug in a programme to develop a reliable test before the Sydney Olympics.

Volunteers aged 18 to 35 will be given a course of the drug erythropoietin (EPO). The substance occurs naturally in humans, but endurance athletes have injected synthetic forms to enhance their performance. EPO increases the ability of the blood to carry oxygen.

Cyclists are tested for EPO use, and prevented from competing when their levels reach a certain mark. But the drug cannot be detected in urine samples and the blood test is not entirely reliable.

The 22 volunteers for the study have to stand out of competition for 14 weeks because it will take nine weeks for the drug to leave the body after the five-week programme. The EPO will be given in small doses under the management of physiologists and doctors, and the volunteers were screened for adverse effects.

Scientists hope to develop a blood test for EPO by the end of April, with approval in time for the Sydney Olympics in 2000.

SPORTING DIGEST

ATHLETICS

US INDOOR TRACK AND FIELD CHAMPIONSHIPS (Atlanta): Men: 60m: 1 T Harden 6.44sec; 2 M Greene 6.49; 3 J Drummond 6.51. **200m:** 1 R Griffin 20.32; 2 K Little 20.41; 3 T Washington 20.73; **400m:** 1 A Taylor 45.50; 2 M Campbell 45.60; 3 D Minor 46.07. **800m:** 1 K Robinson 1min 48.60sec; 2 R Kenah 1:48.65; 3 B Woodward 1:48.72; **Miles:** 1 M Holthaus 4:04.00; 2 D Krummenacher 4:04.42; 3 R Boulet 4:05.46. **3,000m:** 1 A Gourcher 7:46.06; 2 S Holman 7:50.38; 3 B Baker 7:55.77. **60m hurdles:** 1 R Torian 7.38; 2 D Ros 7.44; 3 L Wade 7.59. **High jump:** 1 H Patterson 2.30m; 2 S Smith 2.30; 3 C Austin 2.21. **Pole vault:** 1 J Hartwig 5.92m; 2 N Hysong 5.85; 3 L Johnson 5.80. **Shot put:** 1 A Bloom 20.82m; 2 C J Hunter 20.61; 3 J Godina 20.59. **Heptathlon:** 1 T Rodgers 6,044pts; 2 R Barker 5955; 3 O Pope 5945. **Women: 60m:** 1 G Devers 7.04; 2 I Miller 7.15; 3 C Tapia 7.17. **200m:** 1 Z Feagin-Alexander 23.29; 2 L Colander 23.59; 3 J Ball 23.94. **400m:** 1 J Miles-Clark 51.97; 2 S Porter 52.45; 3 M Collins 52.48. **800m:** 1 M Valmon 2:00.05; 2 M Ave 2:01.82; 3 J Clark 2:02.24. **1500m:** 1 S Hamilton 4:13.96; 2 D Marshall 4:17.51; 3 A Harvey 4:17.93. **3,000m:** 1 R Jacobs 9:06.52; 2 C Kenah 9:1.82; 3 B Phillips 9:13.68. **60m hurdles:** 1 M Morrison 7.85; 2 C Dickey 8.01; 3 A King 8.03. **High jump:** 1 T Waller 1.96; 2 A Acuff 1.93; 3 K Jenkins 1.90.

BASKETBALL

NBA: New Jersey 99 Boston 97; Philadelphia 104 Washington 91; Charlotte 91 Toronto 88; New York 85 Cleveland 78; Orlando 70 Atlanta 67; LA Lakers 97 Phoenix 91; Seattle 105 Sacramento 102.

MEN'S EUROLEAGUE Eighth finals, first leg: Efes Pilsen Istanbul 73 CSKA Moscow 58.

BOWLS

WOMEN'S ALL ENGLAND INDOOR CHAMPIONSHIPS (Exeter): Avon Cosmetics Champion of Champions semi-finals: H Wall (Church Gresley) bt P Bain (Eastbourne) 21-16; T Burgess (Wellingborough) bt T Darnell-Langton (Loddon Vale) 21-15. **Pairs first round:** B Vincent and A Bunclark (Teignbridge) bt C Smith and S Farthing (White Oak) 15-13; C Webb and J Rylance (North Walsham) bt J Burgess and T Burgess (Wellingborough) 33-15; L Tunn and B Brown (Colchester) bt O Green and B Tew (City of Birmingham) 28-12; J Wilson and P Strong (Lincoln) bt R Barber and B Line (Paddington) 21-19; N Craig and A Lennie (Eldon) bt L Smith and H Griffiths (King George Field) 17-11; G Winstone and I Molyneux (Oxford C & C) bt A Burgess and C Cloke (Northavon) 26-11; M Playle and J Annetts (Longmeadow) bt L Rose and M Rixson (Copeland) 19-14; C Ashby and P Bain (Eastbourne) bt B Noyce and M Pitter (Bonister Park) 24-15.

CRICKET

Andy Hayhurst, Derbyshire's director of coaching and development, has left the club by mutual consent.

Australia's tour match against West Indies A scheduled for Barbados from 20 to 23 March has been moved to Antigua. The Kensington Oval in Georgetown is unavailable because it will be hosting the Busta Cup final between Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago.

KENYA SQUAD (for World Cup, England, 14 May to 20 June): Asif Karim (capt), M Odumbe (vice-capt), D Obuya, K Odiero, R Shah, S Tikolo, H Modi, A Vader, Mohammed Sheikh, S Gupta, T Odoyo, T Suji, M Suji, Joseph Angara, J Kamande. **Reserves:** B Patel, F Otieno, L Onyango, P Odhiang.

TOUR MATCH (Pointe-à-Pierre, Trinidad; third day of four): West Indies President's XI 177 (D R E Joseph 64; S C G MacGill 6-45) and 185 (S Ragoonath 53; S C G MacGill 7-29). Australia 368 (M E Waugh 106; R D King 5-75). **Australia win by an innings and six runs.**

BUSTA CUP Semi-final (Bridgetown, Barbados; final day of three): Jamaica 206 (R Powell 114 not; C Collymore 4-60) and 258 (C Gayle 53, N Perry 52; H Bryan 5-72); Barbados 269 (S Campbell 66, R Holder 62; N Perry 5-64) and 167-4 (S Campbell 61, F Reifer 56no). **Barbados win by six wickets and play Trinidad and Tobago in the final.**

FOOTBALL

Thomas Ravelli, the goalkeeper who earned a world record 143 caps for Sweden, said yesterday he had decided to retire after 22 years in the professional game. Ravelli, 39, has been considering his future since he left the Major League Soccer club Tampa Bay Mutiny last November after a year with the club.

The much delayed Scottish Cup tie between Clydebank and Dundee United will go ahead after all at Stirling. Following further negotiations the tie will be played at Stirling Albion's Forthbank Stadium tonight.

Steve Bull is set to make a comeback for Wolves in tonight's reserve match against Bolton at Molineux. Bull has not played since the match at Crewe on 3 October, having undergone two operations on his left knee.

Oxford United have extended the loan of the Everton goalkeeper Paul Gerrard to a third month, and also signed Sweden's former second goalkeeper Paul Lundin on a free transfer from the Swedish club Osters.

George Burley, of Ipswich Town, has been named Nationwide First Division manager of the month for February, while Tony Pulis of Gillingham receives the Second Division award. Leyton Orient's Tommy Taylor earns the Third Division award.

France will play a charity match against a World XI for the first time to honour the former European footballer of the year Jean-Pierre Papin, who retired earlier this season. The match will be played on 30 May at Marseilles' Stade Velodrome. Players such as Paolo Maldini, Roberto Baggio, David Beckham, Lothar Matthäus, Aron Winter and George Weah have been approached to play for the World XI.

GOLF

2000 PRESIDENT'S CUP POSITIONS (for match at the Robert Trent Jones GC, Gainesville, Virginia): International Team: 1 E Els (SA) 9.61pts; 2 V Singh (Fiji) 8.28; 3 N Price (Zim) 8.16; 4 M Ozaki (Japan) 6.77; 5 S Elkington (Aus) 5.95; 6 S Appleby (Aus) 4.32; 7 G Norman (Aus) 4.17; 8 S Maruyama (Japan) 3.44; 9 C Franco (Par) 3.29; 10 C Parry (Aus) 3.03; 11 E Romero (Arg) 2.81; 12 N Ozaki (Japan) 2.78; 13 F Minoza (Phil) 2.79; 14 S Leaney (Aus) 2.48; 15 G Turner (NZ) 2.41. **United States:** 1 Jeff Maggert 1,296,060; 2 O Duval 1,248,300; 3 T Woods 1,150,187; 4 J Sluman 710,670; 5 J Huston 707,673; 6 S Pate 702,103; 7 R Mediate 601,520; 8 J Leonard 619,820; 9 P Stewart 611,500; 10 D Love III 536,367; 11 A Magee 583,947; 12 F Lickliter 435,264; 13 B Gleason 384,450; 14 C Perry 336,138; 15 F Funk 334,550. *(US player points are based on official money earnings from the start of the 1999 season. The International team will be determined by World rankings and will not include any player eligible for the European Ryder Cup team. The leading 10 qualify and each captain choose two wild cards).*

ICE HOCKEY

NHL: San Jose 2 Calgary 1; Edmonton 4 Colorado 3.

FOOTBALL RESULTS

UEFA CUP QUARTER-FINAL FIRST-LEG

Bologna (1) ....3 Lyon (0) 0
Signori 5, 49 33,000
Binotto 54

NATIONWIDE LEAGUE FIRST DIVISION

Postponed: Crewe v Bristol City; Port Vale v Grimsby; Bury v Wolves.

SECOND DIVISION

Postponed: Macclesfield v Stoke; Bristol Rovers v Wycombe.

THIRD DIVISION

Postponed: Darlington v Exeter.

AUTO WINDSCREENS SHIELD NORTHERN SECTION SEMI-FINAL

Postponed: Rochdale v Wigan.

LEAGUE OF WALES Gilbert Cup Semi-final: Postponed: Barry Town v Inter Cable-Tel Cardiff.

SMIRNOFF IRISH LEAGUE Premier Division: Postponed: Newry v Glentoran.

MONDAY'S LATE RESULTS: FA Carling Premiership: Leicester 1 (Cottee 76) Leeds 2 (Kewell 24, Smith 60). **Arnott Insurance Northern League First Division:** Bedlington Terriers 5 Easington 1. **Postponed:** Newcastle Blue Star v Morpeth Town. **Avon Insurance Combination First Division: Postponed:** Reading v Arsenal. **Pontins League Premier Division: Postponed:** Preston v Nottm Forest; Stoke v Sunderland. **Second Division: Postponed:** Newcastle v Sheff Utd. **Third Division: Postponed:** Carlisle v Scunthorpe. **League Cup Quarter-final:** Tranmere 4 Huddersfield 1. **The Times FA Youth Cup Fourth round:** Walsall 1 West Ham 4. **Fifth-round replay:** Everton 3 Sheff Wed 1. **Portuguese League:** Vitoria Guimaraes 2 Vitoria Setubal 0.

RUGBY UNION

SCOTLAND UNDER-21 TEAM (v Italy Under-21, Old Anniesland, Glasgow, Friday): F Rutherford (Peebles); **R Kerr** (West of Scotland), **I McIlroy** (West of Scotland), **A Dickson** (Selkirk), **M Di Rollo** (Watsonians); **C Paterson** (Gala), **R Chrystie** (Melrose); **A Jacobsen** (Preston Lodge FP), **W Jones** (Northampton), **L Harrison** (Exeter), **J White** (Glasgow Caledonians), **T Palmer** (Leeds), **S Taylor** (Heriot's FP), **F Gladstone** (Rugby Lions, capt). **A Martyn** (Boroughmuir). **Replacements: G Ross** (Heriot's FP), **M Lee** (Berwick), **A Hall** (Moseley), **B Redpath**, **C Smith** (both Melrose), **R Palmer**, **C Di Ciacca** (both West of Scotland).

SCOTLAND A TEAM (v Italy A, Netherdale, Friday): S Lang (Edinburgh Reivers); **C Moir** (Northampton), **J Mayer** (Edinburgh Reivers), **R Erlingsson** (London Scottish), **C Joiner** (Leicester); **A Donaldson** (Currie), **G Burns** (Edinburgh Reivers); **G Graham** (Newcastle Falcons), **G Scott** (Glasgow Caledonians), **M Proudfoot** (Edinburgh Reivers), **I Fullerton** (Edinburgh Reivers), **S Campbell** (Glasgow Caledonians), **C Mather** (Edinburgh Reivers), **S Reid** (Capt; Leeds), **S Holmes** (London Scottish). **Replacements: M McKenzie** (Bourgoin-Jallieu), **D Officer** (Harlequins), **W Anderson**, **G Beveridge** (both Glasgow Caledonians), **I Sinclair**, **C Hogg**, **R Russell** (all Edinburgh Reivers).

SNOOKER

THAILAND MASTERS (Bangkok) First round: S Lee (Eng) bt B Snaddon (Sco) 5-3; E Henderson (Sco) bt T Drago (Malta) 5-4; J Swail (Nir) bt A Hamilton (Eng) 5-3; M King (Eng) bt J Burnett (Sco) 5-1.

SQUASH

Scotland's Peter Nicol has held on to the world No 1 spot for the 14th month according to rankings released yesterday by the Professional Squash Association. Nicol, 25, held off Canada's world champion Jonathon Power, who secured a third successive PSA Tour title in February when he won the Flanders Open in Belgium.

TENNIS

COPENHAGEN MEN'S OPEN Singles, first round: F Santoro (Fr) bt T Larsen (Den) 6-3 6-0; R Schützler (Ger) bt L Tieleman (It) 4-6 6-4 6-2; D Nestor (Can) bt A Voinea (Rom) 6-3 6-2; F Fetterlein (Den) bt D Prinosil (Ger) 6-1 6-4.

WTA TOUR RANKINGS (Last week's positions in brackets): 1 M Hingis (Swit) 5,724pts (1); 2 L Davenport (US) 5,547 (2); 3 M Seles (US) 3,823 (4); 4 J Novotna (Cz Rep) 3,677 (3); 5 V Williams (US) 3,177 (5); 6 A Sanchez Vicario (Sp) 3,067 (6); 7 S Graf (Ger) 2,810 (7); 8 M Pierce (Fr) 2,248 (8); 9 A Coetzer (SA) 2,105 (10); 10 N Tauziat (Fr) 2,070 (9); 11 A Kournikova (Rus) 1,941 (13); 12 P Schnyder (Swit) 1,922 (12); 13 D Van Roost (Bel) 1,874 (11); 14 S Testud (Fr) 1,865 (14); 15 A Mauresmo (Fr) 1,861 (18); 16 I Spirlea (Rom) 1,644; 17 C Martinez (Sp) 1,749; 18 N Zvereva (Bela) 1,693; 19 B Schett (Aus) 1,487; 20 J Halard-Decugis (Fr) 1,437; 21 S Williams (US) 1,348; 22 S Farina (It) 1,287; 23 E Likhovtseva (Rus) 1,285; 24 M Serna (Sp) 1,222; 23 A Sugiyama (Japan) 1,046. **Selected: 60** S Smith (GB) 460.

SPORT

BAULCH, THE NEW GOLDEN BOY P21 ● HILL'S UNFINISHED BUSINESS P20

European Cup: United manager stresses the importance of not conceding an away goal against Internazionale

Ferguson's case for the defence

BY GUY HODGSON

THE TIMING of Diego Simeone's admission yesterday that he had feigned injury to get David Beckham sent off during last summer's World Cup finals was not, it can be safely assumed, coincidental.

Simeooe's Internazionale team face Beckham's Manchester United at Old Trafford tonight in the first leg of their European Cup quarter-final and the Italian side have identified the England midfield player as a key to the outcome. Even the least cynical of observers would question the motives for Simeone's admission, which was published in the Italian press yesterday.

Tonight's match sees the two players meet again on the field for the first time since England's World Cup second round match last summer against Argentina in St Etienne, when Beckham flicked out a foot at Simeone, who collapsed to the ground. Beckham was dismissed, England went on to lose the game on penalties and the United player has since been pilloried by opposing supporters.

That is an enormous amount of derision and Beckham, who has been reluctant to discuss his dismissal, would not be human if St Etienne had oot crossed his mind even before Simeone's comments. Now it looks certain to be at the forefront.

Alex Ferguson, who has his own opinion as to why Simeone should suddenly confess now, was anxious yesterday to play down the matter. "We'll do our talking on the pitch," the United manager said. "We'll just play the game and not get involved in this. The referee is there to sort out Simeone on the field."

Nevertheless Ferguson could have done without this distraction before his team's most important game of the season to date. He has refused to get involved in the "will he, won't he?" debate that has surrounded whether Ronaldo will play tonight and had hoped nothing else would divert atteotioo from the task ahead.

That, be stressed yesterday, was not to concede an away goal – doing so proved terminal against Monaco at the same stage of the European Cup last season – and not to be taken in by reports emanating from Italy of Inter's weaknesses, with or without Ronaldo.

Inter are currently sixth in their domestic league, 13 points behind the leaders, Lazio. Despite a forward line that includes Roberto Baggio and Youri Djorkaeff they have not scored in their last three matches. Against that they conceded only five goals in Group C of the Champions' League qualifying phase and finished above the reigning champions, Real Madrid.

Ferguson was focusing on that yesterday, comparing the Italians to the ruthlessly efficient defences of the Sixties and Seventies. "Inter are a throwback to the *catenaccio* system," he said. "They don't give anything away and they manmark tightly.

"The Milan team of the late Eighties with Rijkaard, Van Basten, Baresi and Maldini brought a freshness to Italian football and Juventus carried it on with with fantastic aggressive play. Inter are different. They try to catch you at a weak moment."

As for their domestic form, he believes it to be irrelevent. "We can disregard that," Ferguson said. "It's a quarter-final tie and you'd expect them to be motivated for that. It's their only chance of an honour. Some clubs can plan to go for one trophy and forget everything else."

Dwight Yorke and Andy Cole's contest with the parsimonious Inter back three will probably decide tonight's first leg, although a more down to earth factor might be just as influential. The pitch, which has been relaid once and was patched up last month, resembled Old Trafford cricket ground yesterday with covers to protect the more vulnerable areas from the constant teeming rain. It was a futile effort.

With more rain forecast for Manchester today it is likely to be more a mud heap than a bowling green and certainly will not be a surface on which anyone would gamble suspect fitness. Ronaldo, for example.

Inter did not hring the Brazilian oo the plane with them yesterday but Ferguson was not buying that as final confirmation of his oon-availablity. He recalled that Jürgen Köhler did not travel with Borussia Dortmund two seasons ago and still played at Old Trafford, courtesy of a private jet.

"I'm not convinced," Ferguson said. "When Italians tell me it's pasta I check under the sauce to see if it is. They are masters of the smokescreen. They come out with 'the English are so strong, we're terrible in the air, we can't do this we can't do that'. Then they beat you 3-0.

"I'll wait to see their team. I ask this question: Why did Ronaldo play in a practice match last Friday?"

Cagy, suspicious, but the United manager is purring that his side are as well prepared as they could be. The acquisition of Yorke and Jaap Stam has strengthened a team which was good enough to reach Europe's last eight last season and he is reinforced by the fitness of Ryan Giggs and Roy Keane ,who were both missing against Monaco.

"We have everyone fit and in the last two or three years we have not had that privilege," be said. "The team is playing well enough, the spirit's good so the recipe is there all right. I don't think we could be more pleased."

A 3-0 win tonight would challenge that assertion.

Lessons of history, page 24

RED DEVILS AGAINST THE ITALIANS

Record of matches between Manchester Utd and Internazionale*

31 July, 1996
Inter 3 (Carbone, Branca 2) Man Utd 0

13 August, 1996
Man Utd 0 Inter 1 (Zamorano)

27 July, 1997
Inter 1 (G Neville og) Man Utd 1 (Butt)

30 July, 1997
Man Utd 1 (Clegg) Inter 1 (Ganz)

(all friendlies)*

Record against other Italian clubs

1997-98 – Champions' League
Juventus (h), won 3-2 (Sheringham, Scholes, Giggs).
Juventus (a), lost 1-0.

1996-97 – Champions' League
Juventus (a), lost 1-0
Juventus (h), lost 0-1

1983-84 – Cup-Winners' Cup semi-final
Juventus (h), 1st leg – drew 1-1 (Davies).
Juventus (a), 2nd leg – lost 1-2 (Whiteside). Lost 2-3 on aggregate.

1976-77 – Uefa Cup Second round
Juventus (h), 1st leg – won 1-0 (Hill).
Juventus (a), 2nd leg – lost 3-0. Lost 1-3 on aggregate.

1968-69 – European Cup semi-final
Milan (a), 1st leg – lost 0-2
Milan (h), 2nd leg – won 1-0 (Charlton). Lost 1-2 on aggregate.

1957-58 – European Cup semi-final
Milan (h), 1st leg – won 2-1 (Viollet, E Taylor (pen).
Milan (a), 2nd leg – lost 0-4. Lost 2-5 on aggregate.

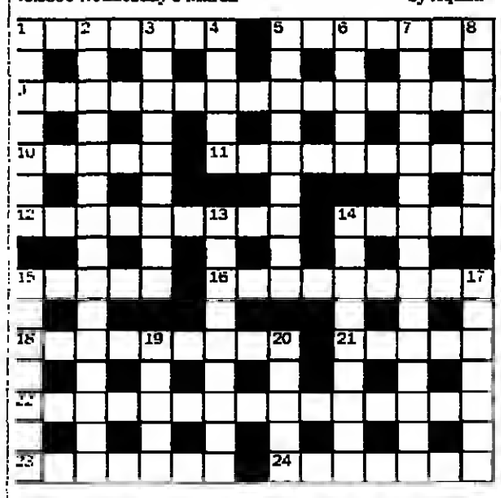
TONIGHT'S PROBABLE TEAMS

KICK-OFF 7.45 (ITV)

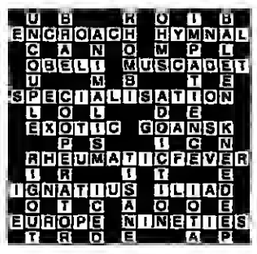
Alex Ferguson, the Manchester United manager, contemplating his task yesterday *Press Association*

THE WEDNESDAY CROSSWORD

No.3860 Wednesday 3 March — by Aquila



Tuesday's Solution



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Wednesday 3 March 1999 — Registered as a newspaper with the Post Office

Le Saux and Fowler charged by the FA

BY MARK PIERSON

GRAEME LE SAUX and Robbie Fowler have been charged with misconduct by the Football Association following the England team-mates' running feud during Chelsea's 2-1 Premiership victory over Liverpool at Stamford Bridge on Saturday.

Le Saux, the Chelsea fullback, appeared to elbow Fowler after being taunted by the Liverpool striker. The FA made its decision after studying video evidence. The pair have 14 days to lodge an appeal.

The referee, Paul Durkin, and fourth official, Dermot Gallagher, missed the off-the-ball incident, which left Fowler flat on the turf. However, television pictures, captured by BBC's *Match Of The Day* cameras, appeared to show Le Saux's elbow make contact with the back of Fowler's head. Bad feeling between the players had been building up before the incident, with Fowler goading Le Saux.

After seeing the video evidence himself Durkin, who had booked both players earlier and warned them to stop the goading, said that had he seen the incident he would have sent Le Saux off.

Now the pair, who looked certain to be called up by the oew England coach, Kevin Keegan for the vital Euro 2000 qualifier against Poland oo 27 March, are likely to be hit with suspensions and fines by the FA.

The Chelsea player-manager, Gianluca Vialli, yesterday called for an amicable solution, asking Le Saux and Fowler to shake hands oo the incident.

"They were both wrong to do what they did and now I think it would be fine to see the pair of them get together, admit that they both made a mistake, and then say, 'let's forget it'." Vialli said.

Vialli said he will be taking oo action over the incident against Le Saux, but he has spoken to him. "When you are in a team that becomes very good you have to handle the stick. I know from experience that it has been far worse in Italy than it is here. Graeme knows something has gone wrong and he is the first one to admit he has made a mistake, and now he should know what to do if it happens in the future.

"I cannot say too much to him because I was sent off myself against Blackburn a few weeks ago. But with a player like Graeme I don't have to say too much."

Le Saux: Video evidence

Vialli believes Chelsea can mount a strong defence of Le Saux to save him a possible four-match ban.

"I'm thinking about the match recently when Arsenal played Preston and one of Preston's players was hit before Arsenal scored a goal. Everybody saw it on video, but it was not in the referee's report and no action was taken," Vialli added.

The man who escaped an FA charge on that occasion was Arsenal's Spanish reserve striker Fabian Caballero, but the FA has used video evidence several times to bring players to book.

Le Saux has been involved in at least two other incidents this season, a bust-up with Arsenal's Lee Dixon in August and another at Blackburn – his former club – a few weeks later when both Le Saux and French midfielder Sebastien Perez were dismissed.

The Referees' Association has backed the FA's decision to use video evidence. Its president, Peter Willis, has welcomed the growing trend for trial-by-television.

"If the FA and clubs are prepared to accept the use video evidence to exonerate players, then I cannot see the problem in using the same video evidence to show where players have misbehaved when they haven't been seen," Willis said.

"It is simple justice. It is not a questioo of bow you get caught. If people break the rules in a serious nature, then it is right and proper that the governing bodies look at it."

Atletico poised to make £17m bid for Anelka

BY ALAN NIXON

ATLETICO MADRID are poised to make a £17m offer for Arsenal's French striker Nicolas Anelka, according to Spanish media reports. Atletico have money to spend as they have effectively oot replaced Christian Vieri since the Italian moved to Lazio last summer.

The Spanish transfer season does not begin until the summer, with no players able to be bought during the current campaign.

Peter Schmeichel hopes his performance against Internazionale tonight will attract attention from a *Serie A* side interested in signing a goalkeeper for next season.

The Dane's scheme, revealed to the Italian press, raises doubts about his original coment that he was leaving Old Trafford because of the "pressure of games".

Schmeichel will be extremely attractive to teams in Italy, as he is a free agent and might settle for a one-year contract. Roma have already shown interest in him.

Manchester United may yet persuade him to stay, hut their spies are this week to watch watching the two leading candidates to replace him, Mallorca's Carlos Roa and Parma's Pierluigi Buffon. The Argentinian Roa plays in the European Cup-winners' Cup against Croatian's Varteks, tomorrow while Buffon was watched by a delegation at Bordeaux last night.

Middlesbrough will meet the Italian striker Marco Branca today to discuss his determination to return to Premiership action. The 34-year-old former Inter player has been fighting against a career-threatening knee injury since April last year, and he has played barely 20 minutes of football over the past 11 months.

Boro terminated his contract on medical advice in December after Branca was unable to provide any evidence that his knee would be able to stand up to a return to the top level of the professional game. Now the striker, armed with the diagnosis of Professional Footballers' Association orthopaedic surgeon, David Dandy, claims to have woo his battle for fitness.

Boro yesterday said they would hold a meeting with Branca today, but the club's spokesman, Dave Allan, hinted that Branca's return to action is not a foregone conclusion.

"We have received a draft of Mr Dandy's report which isn't inconsistent with the earlier diagnosis from Andrew Weeber," he said. "In view of the reports of the two consultants and Marco's insistence that he wants to continue playing, we're going to sit down with him on Wednesday and try to work out a satisfactory solution for all concerned."

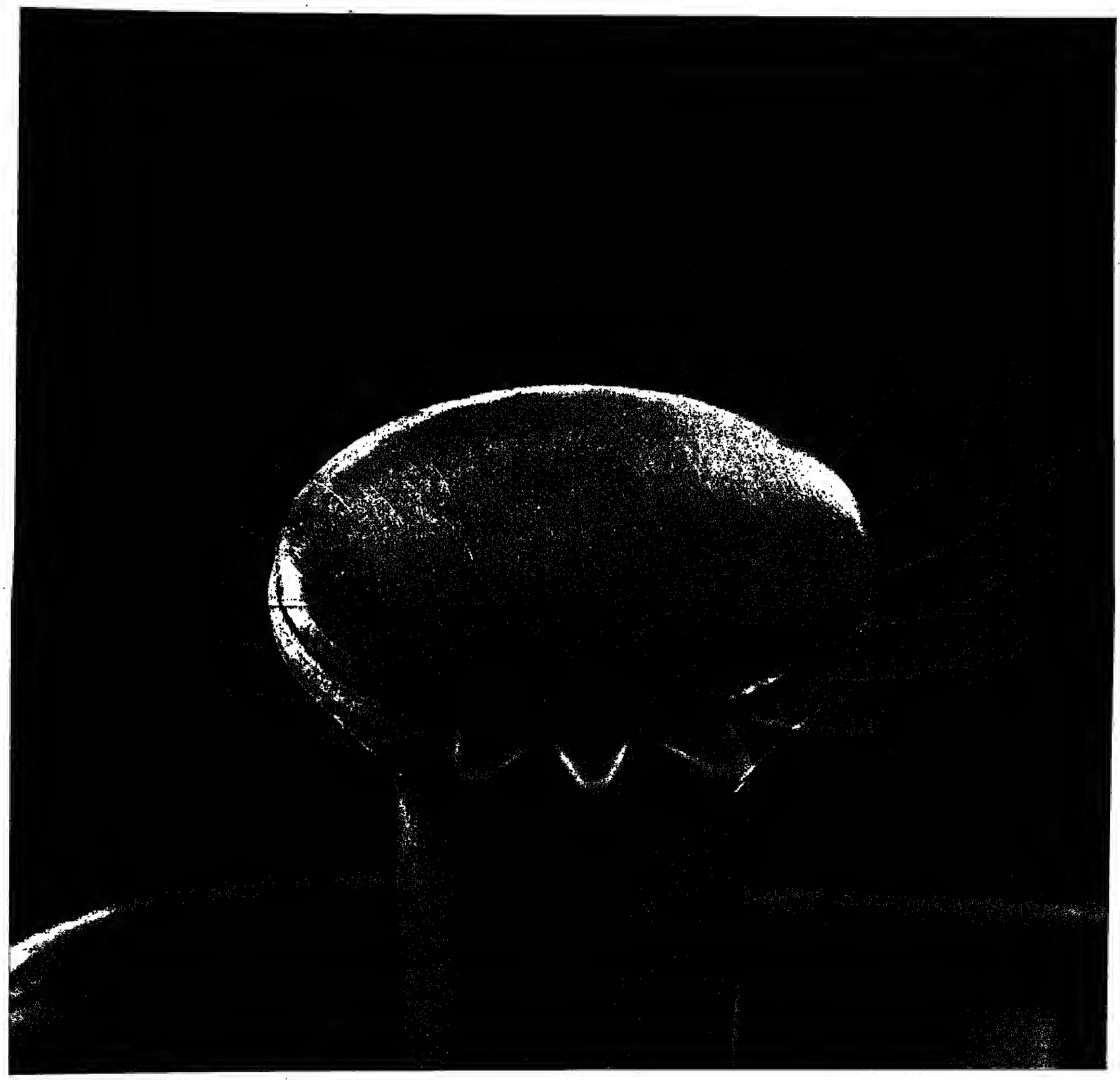
Miguel Dominguez, a 19-year-old Paraguayan striker, has joined Middlesbrough on loan.

THE INDEPENDENT
3 March 1999

BUSINESS REVIEW

RING OF CONFIDENCE

HOW CENTRICA TURNED UP THE HEAT IN THE CITY



Inside: Why Sir John Hall failed to turn Newcastle into the club of his dreams, page 5

The radio executive's radio executive, page 6

Plus: Hamish McRae, Diane Coyle, Derek Pain, Jo Davis and The Trader

INCLUDES FINANCE AND INVESTMENT

THE BUSINESS WORLD

Cut the red tape and let small firms breathe

HAMISH McRAE

IF YOU are running a small business, or thinking of starting one, which of the following three things would you want of the Chancellor in next week's Budget? One: some new tax incentive for small businesses? Two: a package to boost enterprise and productivity? Or three: simply fewer government regulations?

Yes, it would be nice to have all three, but my guess would be that if business people had to choose only one, most would plump for the third. They don't want government to do more. They want it to do less.

There is the dilemma for Gordon Brown, and one of the most interesting things to look at next Tuesday will be how he tries to resolve it. For everything he has said about the forthcoming Budget, his instincts to try to find ways of encouraging enterprise will be translated into tax inceotives and a more general business-boosting package. But if you look in practice at what has happened in the past few weeks, small businesses have been damaged by government action.

The introduction of self assessment has put a sharp cash squeeze on large numbers of sole traders, an effect made worse because the Inland Revenue miscalculated many of the tax demands. In addition, even small businesses have had additional admin burdens loaded on to them by European Union directives on work bours, while the minimum wage and the working families tax credit have put still greater loads on the management team. In short, what the government says is precisely the opposite to what it does.

There is a particular problem here for small businesses. Large ones hire people to cope with the additional administrative work. This costs money, but large companies can always shed some workers or close a factory to offset the cost. A small business usually cannot afford to do so and a sole trader cannot do anything at all, except try to reallocate their time away from the job and towards doing the admin instead.

The Government's defence would be that these costs are still lower than those of other EU countries. That is a fair point, but then the rate of business start-ups is lower there than it is here. If you exclude farmers the proportion of self-employed is lower too. The key comparison is not with Europe but with the US, where there is a higher business start-up rate.

Is the admin burden on US business, particularly small business, lower than it is on UK ones? Well, no. It is almost certainly higher. In the Global Competitiveness Survey, the UK did well in terms of the time that business people had to spend with bureaucrats: only the Scandinavian countries ranked better. The US was in the middle and among the big European countries, France and particularly Italy ranked badly.

But Italy has vibrant small businesses, and in much of Scandinavia they are worried about the lack of emerging businesses. So anyone trying to argue that excessive bureaucracy is the main thing holding back business start-ups in Britain has a tough case to argue. It is very difficult to get any hard evidence, but my guess would be that the UK bureaucratic burden, while worse than it was five years ago, is still acceptable by international standards.

So what is to be done? We should not sneer at the measures Gordon Brown will announce on Tuesday. Expect better investment allowances for small firms, further tax incentives for venture capital investment, including something for high-technology companies, and changes in capital gains tax to encourage asset holders who retain those assets for a number of years.

Expect better investment allowances for small firms, further tax incentives for venture capital investment – including something for high-technology companies – and changes in capital gains tax

These changes should be helpful but it would be naive to expect anything dramatic to occur. The incentives for Venture Capital Trusts and for the Enterprise Investment Scheme are pretty big already. In so far as there is a financing gap for small start-ups, the problem is not lack of tax incentives but other barriers, which have more to do with culture and attitude than anything that can be tackled by a tax break.

For a start the number of rich people wanting to risk their capital by backing a new venture is quite small. Next, the mechanism linking would-be investors with would-be entrepreneurs is haphazard. Once you get above about £250,000 the specialist venture capital companies start to become interested, but most start-ups need a lot less money than that. Below £250,000 the costs of examining a project, making a decision, and monitoring the investment become too big relative to the rewards. So the only possible source of funds is from private individuals who want, as much as anything, the fun of backing a new business.

What is to be done? I have no magic wand, but I have a suggestion. It is that the Government should look at the regional differences in business start-up rates and try to identify why some regions – London and the South-east in particular – have high business start-up rates, while others – such as parts of Scotland – have relatively low ones. Is it a problem of supply or demand – is it possible to identify whether in some regions there is a relative shortage of capital to back ventures, or whether in those regions there is a shortage of people coming up with the projects? If the problem is money, it is relatively easy to fix. If it is a dearth of would-be entrepreneurs it is harder – but until you know the nature of the problem, you cannot begin to think bow to fix it.

The good news is that much of the infrastructure for assisting new businesses is in place. The various development bodies have spent the past two decades trying to encourage inward investment, and been successful. But it is expensive to develop the incentives and companies are liable to up and leave. Now several of them are looking at refocusing their activities to try to boost local businesses. It is not easy and the impact on job creation, even when successful, is less dramatic. But within some of these organisations there is a growing view that this is the only secure way forward if you want to regenerate an area. Seeing foreign companies shut a number of high-profile plants in the past couple of years has had a searing impact on development agencies' attitudes.

Does this mean more bureaucracy? Well, yes, in the sense that if a publicly funded agency is involved, there has to be proper controls as to the way taxpayers' money is spent. But development agencies can be enormously helpful in meeting small businesses' needs. They can start by setting up helplines to assist them to obey all those regulations.

DATELINE: PEKING, CHINA

Prepare to shut up shop at any time

BY TERESA POOLE

IF EVER a country embodied the entrepreneurial spirit. It is China at the end of the 20th century.

Access to fast-changing technology and a "flexible" approach to business arrangements and outdated regulatory frameworks cootribute to a contagious optimism about money-making opportunities.

Anything seems possible – until the frontline soldiers in China's long march towards a dynasty of small private businessmen confront the might of the Chinese state.

Take the Chen brothers, in tbe Mawei district of Fuzhou city, in the south-eastern province of Fujian. Chen Zhui and Chen Yan have found themselves in a "David and Goliath" fight with China Telecom, the state telephone giant whose employee roll-call runs to more than a million.

It is outraged by a recent court ruling, which decreed that the Chen brothers had *not* broken the law in setting up an Internet international phone service in the back room of their suburban store, undercutting the sky-high call rates charged by the state monopoly.

The seeds of the trouble were planted in late 1997, when the Cben brothers launched their Internet service, offering five minutes of free international telephone time to entice customers into their electronics shop. Sooo they were operating as a small phone service, attracting up to 20 callers a day.

China Telecom used its clout to send in the police, who detained the two men on charges of "endangering national security", confiscated their computer equipment, and bung on to 50,000 yuan (£4,000) in casb after releasing the brothers.

Unusually for China, tbe Cbens decided to fight back. Last May, they went to the local Mawei court, claiming that as there were no laws or regulations outlawing the private provision of telephone services over the Internet, they could not have committed a crime. They accused the police of wrongful behaviour, and demanded the return of their equipmeot and money. The court said they had oo case.

They appealed to the Intermediate People's Court in Fuzhou. Against all expectations, the Chens won, and the original case against the police was sent back to the Mawei court with orders to be heard by the end of April.

As the case stands now, this represents something of a bollow, albeit extraordinary, victory. The police still have the computers and the money, and China Telecom swiftly introduced new regulations last September, saying that anyooe running an Internet telepbone service must first have its approval.

"Certain unlawful and illegitimate operators ... bave taken a large part of revenues from us, amounting to several billion yuan," said Zhang Cbunjiang, director of the Telecommunications Management Bureau at the Ministry of Information Industry in Peking. "This is tantamount to information smuggling."

He said China Telecom had plans for Internet telecommunications, and did not intend to share the business with allcomers. Tbe Cbens will go down in the annals of China's commercial history as failed early champions of consumer choice. They are unlikely to be the only ones. In Peking, the small traders of Sanlitun district are involved in a similar struggle of unequals, pitting risk-taking individuals against central planners.

Over the past five years, this part of the city has evolved into the nearest thing Peking has to a Hampstead High Street.

Encouraged by a critical mass of expatriates, and a growing number of middle-class Pekingers, Chinese and foreign entrepreneurs have set up a string of small, mostly private shops and restaurants along the tree-lined Gongti North Street.

They includeJenny Lou's grocery store, Siegliende Schindler's German butcher, the Italian cheese shop, and Farid Fakhour's Middle Eastern restaurant and cake shop.

Now eveo the smallest foreign-invested retail business must have a Chinese joint venture partner, and the most modest private Chinese business is at the mercy of demands from local bureaucrats for extra fees, taxes and permits. Even the clearest rental lease can turn out to be worthless. Especially when the local government wants to send in the bulldozers.

All these businesses have just been told by local cadres that they have only weeks to evacuate their premises, which are to be demolished for underground heating pipes and road-widening.

"I signed a four-year lease for my restsurant building," said Mr Fakhour, a Syrian who has been doing business in China for two decades, and whose popular Thousand and One Nights restaurant opened only last April. "First I heard from other traders. Then after two or three days there was a letter, oot signed, saying that they were going to demolish us."

None of the businesses will receive either compensation or the offer of alternative accommodation. In the face of a constructioo project blessed by central government, oo one believes there is any point trying to fight.

Wang Jianying is the driving force behind the Jenny Lou grocery stores and one of the most successful small Chinese traders in Peking. Her Gongti North Street shop opened in April 1997 with a five-year lease. "How can they break it? Because it is the government's building. We spoke to them, but it's oo use," she said.

If there is one essential quality for anyone doing business in China it is stamina.

"I know China very well," said Mr Fakhour. "I have my idea for business. When I lose something, I forget about it."

Farid Fakhour is resigned to losing his popular new Thousand and One Nights restaurant to the bulldozers *Natalie Behring*

A WEEKLY DIGEST OF THE WORLD'S FINANCIAL PRESS

FINANCIAL TIMES

FINANCIAL TIMES
Why companies should provide investors with more frequent information

BRITISH COMPANIES should move to quarterly reporting immediately, with monthly frequency a realistic target.

An imaginative company would make its data available on its website in manipulable formats. Long-run data, in a standardised format, are also badly needed. Once these steps are taken, the way is clear for more frequent reporting.

Today's annual report is, like a Victorian soapshot, an artificial moment in time. Just over half a century ago, the Lumière brothers broke free, to bring us the motion picture. Business activity, like the life that films capture, is a flow, not a series of discontinuous steps. It is time for corporate reporting to make that switch.

Peter Martin, FT columnist

BusinessWeek

BUSINESS WEEK
On how Olivetti's bid for Telecom Italia signals a turning point for European capitalism

A FLOOD of private investment in equities is forcing Italian capital markets to grow more sophisticated fast. And old-boy relationships are fraying. For example, Milan'a secretive Mediobanca, once the virtual house bank of the Agnellis, is backing Olivetti, while the Agnellis themselves are publically backing Franco Bernabe.

Hordes of American investment bankers are speeding this transformation. In fact, it was bankers from Lehman and DLJ who came up with the idea for Olivetti's raid. In the coming days, Italian politicans may find it hard to resist interfering. But whether Olivetti succeeds or fails is almost beside the point: For European capitalism, there is no going back.

Cover story

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

WALL ST JOURNAL
On how Tony Blair must now move the euro debate in Britain forward

THE WARS of the euro-(sceptics/enthusiasts) generate a lot of beat, but little light. The only constant in the mind-numbing crossfire was the government'a agility in parrying the question of bow to decide.

That, at least has changed. Prime Minister Tony Blair made clear he wants to see Britain join the euro as soon as possible. Now, the cards are stacked against entry into EMU. Mr Blair's first test will come in the election for the European Parliament in June.

Mr Blair must win support for his government's policy not with slogans, but by cutting through the *Strum und Drang* of the current "debate" and putting the arguments directly to the British people.

Leader comment

FINANCIAL NEWS

FINANCIAL NEWS
On how the Revenue is trying to chip away pension funds' privileged tax status

THE REVENUE is in effect trying to move the goal posts retrospectively by using anti-avoidance legislation enacted long before such [share] buy-backs were even thought of.

It is Parliament, not the Reveoue, that should be laying down the law on taxes. But the Revenue's actioo is even more extraordinary giveo the Governmeot's eagerness to encourage funded pensions.

The Revenue appears to be ploughing a semi-autonomous furrow with its "paid-by-results" investigators and it is hard to reconcile what it is up to with the Government's broader policy aims on pensions. The Government should call its tax collectors to beel.

Leader comment

FORTUNE

FORTUNE
On US threats to impose punative tariffs on European luxury goods over bananas

SOME EXPERTS believe establishing the authority of the WTO is worth America's thick-skinned approach. Still, it is an open question whether the strategy of targeting products is useful; it is certainly ugly to watch.

Unfortunately, there are few choices available to countries wbose ecooomies have been barmed by discriminatory trade policies.

For now, America and Europe are squabbling over a little yellow fruit that neither one produces. And folks [producing cashmere] in the Scottisb Borders have little choice but to pray that calmer beads – prevail in time to save their fall season – and their jobs.

Len A Costa

The Economist

THE ECONOMIST
The single European currency is already showing signs of wear and tear

EUROPE'S ECONOMIC road is looking suddenly much bumpier. This is not the euro'a fault. But the rules surrounding it may make things worse. The European Central Bank has said it will not reduce interest rates unless governments continue to reduce their budget deficits. In the long run that is a worthy goal. But now it misses the point. Not only does the combined stance of monetary and fiscal policy need to be eased in the euro area, but in some economies fiscal policy may need to be used to support demand. The euro's design faults increase the risk that a slowdown in growth could lead to a recession. Which might put at risk even the euro's very survival.

Leader comment

COVER STORY

Roy Gardner (right) and Mark Clare of Centrica, which last week reported its first profit and rewarded shareholders who had remained loyal with a special dividend totalling £530m *Tom Craig*

Old flame, new fire

BY MICHAEL HARRISON

Two years ago, British Gas held the dubious accolade of being Britain's most hated corporation, having earned its place in history as the birthplace of the Fat Cat. Then it was broken up, and today Centrica, its sales arm, is one of the nation's most admired companies with money to burn. It is even toying with buying the RAC. So how was this transformation achieved?



The rushes from British Gas's latest TV advertising campaign, which is helping to claw back customers

WHEN BRITISH GAS was broken up two years ago into a trading company called Centrica and a gas storage and transportation business called BG, they carved up the rights to the trade name between them.

But they also drew up a "poison pill" agreement to protect each other. If either company were taken over, the new owner would forfeit the right to call itself British Gas or use the familiar blue flame logo.

At the time it did not seem to be much of a defence against hostile takeover bids. Indeed, it looked more like the product of some terrible, misguided vanity. Far from being a prize asset, the name of British Gas was Mudd. Customer complaints were at an all-time high. The company had earned the soubriquet of the most hated corporation in Britain. Cedric Brown, its former chief executive, had assured British Gas a footnote in history as the birthplace of the Fat Cat. It was the kind of publicity that would make most firms desperate to change their identity, not ringfence it.

Of the two new businesses, Centrica was the one most in the firing line. It was the public face of British Gas to 19 million disgruntled customers through its chain of High Street energy centres. It was also responsible for checking three million central heating boilers through the three-star service scheme.

If any business was on a hiding to nothing, it was Centrica. But its troubles did not stop there. Competition had been introduced into the domestic gas market and British Gas's monopoly was being eroded fast by smarter and nimbler rivals who did not carry the same negative baggage and could offer cheaper prices. To cap it all, Centrica had inherited some £30bn in liabilities in the shape of the old parent company's take-or-pay gas contracts in the North Sea.

If all of that wasn't enough to sink Centrica outright, it was sufficiently serious, potentially, to hole it below the waterline. Small surprise that the British Gas chairman, Sir Richard Giordano, had a simple piece of advice for the army of Sids who had jumped on board in 1987 when the business was privatised – abandon ship now.

There didn't seem to be much future in being a shareholder anyway since Centrica was not forecasting anything other than losses and was therefore not paying a dividend.

How times change. Last week, Centrica reported its first profit and, to reward those shareholders who had remained loyal, announced a special dividend totalling £530m. And Centrica has reversed the tide of customer desertions. Its share of the domestic market has fallen to 80 per cent but for the first time since competition began in April, 1996, it is gaining more customers than it is losing. Since the opening of the electricity market to competition last August, it has also set itself the goal of replacing every one of the four million gas customers lost with a customer from one of the regional electricity companies. After seven months, it is a quarter of the way towards its target. But its sights now stretch beyond home energy. It wants to buy the RAC's motoring services division and is also lining up a consortium bid for Drax, Britain's biggest power station. Ultimately, Centrica sees no reason why it shouldn't leverage its customer base of 15.5 million households and the British Gas name to provide everything from car insurance and home shopping to mortgages and domestic appliance repairs.

There are several factors behind the transformation. Customer inertia is one. Based on Centrica's experience in those regions where competition has been running longest, it looks as if loss of market share has hit a natural floor at about 30 per cent. Centrica's ability to offer "dual fuel" deals to households has made it price-competitive. The series of documentary-style television adverts, using real customers and real service engineers and filmed by Dominic Savage, the *Cutting Edge* director, also plays cleverly to the strengths of the British Gas brand. But most of the renaissance is down to two men, Centrica's chief executive, Roy Gardner, and its finance director, Mark Clare. Mr Gardner is all restless energy, his muscular physique accentuated by a tan he picked up last month in the Bahamas. Before joining British Gas as finance director in 1994, he was managing director of GEC Marconi where he learned his trade under Lord Weinstock. Mr Clare, a former STC executive, is one of those finance directors who is a big picture man, not simply a number cruncher. They make an interesting contrast with the two top men at BG, David Varney and Philip Hampton, who are also highly rated but in a different way. Where Mr Gardner is streetwise and forever on the lookout for a deal, Mr Varney is analytic to the point of being ethereal.

"Gardner would sell his granny if he thought he could make a turn on it whereas Varney would probably philosophise on the ethics of treating old people in that way," says one analyst. "Gardner is a streetfighter. He just wants to take the gloves off and get in there."

His pugilistic tendencies have not hurt the share price. Since demerger in February, 1997, Centrica has outperformed the market by 20 per cent, not bad for a company that recorded a bottom line loss of £791m in its first year of trading. Dr Rod Maclean, oil and gas analyst at ABN Amro, says: "Slowly but surely, they are putting the pieces together. They have renegotiated a good deal of the take-or-pay contracts, their gas market loss is less than expected and they have done better in electricity than they thought they would. As for the energy regulator, he has much bigger fish to fry elsewhere." Centrica says the cost of acquiring each new electricity customer is £30 compared with the £100 a head National Power paid when it bought the supply business of Midlands Electricity and the £200 per customer PowerGen is paying through its acquisition of East Midlands Electricity. The City likes these numbers and the extra profit it expects Centrica to squeeze out of its new customer base.

ABN Amro is forecasting that operating profits will more than double from £208m last year to £528m in 2002. "The question is, 'Where to next'," says Mr Maclean. "What worries some people is what they might buy and what the long-term growth prospects for the company are."

In particular, what worries the market is the idea that Centrica might become a roadside breakdown service. Mr Gardner says he has merely registered an interest in RAC. Even if it does bid it is expected to offer substantially less than the £450m that Cendant of the US was prepared to pay. "Our operations are quite similar in terms of logistics, customer interface, billing and purchasing so the savings would be quite large," says Mr Gardner.

That much is true. Both businesses have men and vans and call centres and both provide an emergency service, which makes their cultures similar. But Centrica sees opportunities beyond that to exploit its expertise as a service company. Mr Gardner says that other than BT, no other company has a comparable customer base. He believes it could support a great many more products and services around the home. Last year Centrica launched a home security division and more recently it has started experimenting with air-conditioning and electrical repair.

Beyond that it is examining the potential of home shopping and the burgeoning market of home automation – remote diagnostic systems that monitor utility services in the house. If Centrica takes the plunge into mortgages, it would be through its financial services division, which pioneered the successful launch of Goldfish and now has nearly 900,000 card members.

Inevitably, this has raised fears that Centrica may overstretch itself at the expense of its bedrock business of gas supply. But the Gas Consumers Council does not share this concern.

Jenny Kirkpatrick, its chairwoman, says: "Provided it brings greater energy efficiency into the home and doesn't disadvantage those who are less able to afford the add-on services, then it will be beneficial."

The council is less happy with Centrica's dominant market position. "After nearly three years of competition, it still supplies eight in 10 homes with gas and looks like replacing all its lost gas market with new electricity customers," says Ms Kirkpatrick. "If I was one of the smaller players up against British Gas, I'd be cheesed off."

Mr Gardner likes it that way.

CENTRICA TURNS UP THE HEAT

CENTRICA WAS formed from the demerger of British Gas on 17 February 1997. It is valued at £5.2bn and has 15,000 employees and 15,500,000 domestic and industrial customers. It also operates a 240-strong chain of gas showrooms and has a service division with three million customers.

Its chairman is Sir Michael Perry, the former chairman of the consumer products giant Unilever. But the driving forces behind the company are Roy Gardner, its chief executive, and Mark Clare, the finance director. Mr Gardner, 53, has run the New York and London marathons and is an avid Manchester United fan. He joined British Gas in November 1994 as finance director and took charge of the businesses that formed Centrica a year later.

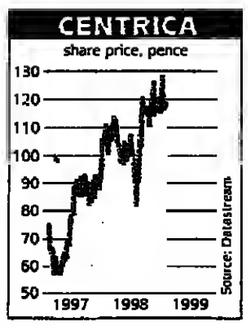
Mr Clare is regarded in the City as much more than a conventional finance director. "He's very much in control of the strategy as well as the numbers," says one analyst. "Together they make an impressive pair."

The rewards of success are large. Mr Gardner earns £493,000 a year and has a further 1.3m Centrica shares earmarked for him under the company's long-term incentive scheme.

In addition he has 1.4m share options currently showing a paper profit of £500,000.

But the 1.3m Sids who have stuck with Centrica since demerger also stand to gain – its share price has risen 60 per cent in the last two years.

Apart from gas, Centrica is also the company behind the Goldfish credit card, which now has 900,000 members. It is keen to expand further into financial services, possibly offering mortgages. It is also looking at buying the RAC.



THE INDEPENDENT
Wednesday 3 March 1999

ENTERPRISE ISSUES

There's profit in empowerment of your people

DIANE COYLE

Many managers merely pay lip service to their workforce and ignore the real potential

IF SOMEBODY was to write a business version of Gustave Flaubert's *Dictionary of Received Ideas*, the great novelist's satire of conventional wisdom and cliché, it would certainly contain the entry: "People: our most important asset."

As with any notion that has lost its freshness, it is well worth asking what it means and whether it is correct. Surprisingly, this mainstay of management-speak has rarely been checked against reality. Perhaps even more surprising, when it is, it turns out to be true.

After all, it is easy to be cynical about the lip-service paid by most managers to that precious resource, their workforce. It only takes a little casual observation to demonstrate that many managers subscribe to other schools of practice – especially the "grind 'em down, keep 'em in the dark, and work 'em hard for as little as you can get away with paying" schools.

Even in so-called "people businesses" such as advertising or management consultancy, it is clear that many bosses hate the thought of ceding any control to employees or, well, having to manage their staff. In most companies the personnel or "human resources" department has little to do with managing human resources, acting rather as a sort of compliance office to make sure the company is not breaking the law.

Yet recent research that tries to quantify the potential effects of decent people-management suggests that the gains could be huge, dwarfing the likely impact of more R&D, better strategic planning or quality drives. A study carried by high-profile academics for the Institute of Personnel and Development uses a regular survey of 67 medium-sized manufacturing companies in Sheffield since 1990. It assesses and quantifies the links between a variety of management policies and the companies' productivity and profitability performance.

The study finds that people management is one of the management inputs that does affect business output. What is a real eye-opener is the fact that people-management is both vastly more important than the other elements of management and has a very big impact on profits and productivity. As the IPD concludes, with some satisfaction: "The findings underline the general message that it is how companies manage their employees that is crucial to business success."

The research, carried out by Professor Michael West at Sheffield University, Professor Stephen Nickell of Oxford University and other researchers at Sheffield, addresses four questions. Is there a link between employees' job satisfaction and company performance? Is "organisational culture" a guide to company performance? Which people-management policies make most difference to results? And how do they compare with the impact of other policies such as investment in R&D, investment in new technology and competitive strategy?

The answers are: Yes, job satisfaction alone can raise profits by 5 per cent; yes, "cultural" factors can account for 10 per cent of the variation in profits between different companies; job design – particularly giving workers shopfloor responsibility – and skill development each explain about half of the contribution of people policies to company performance; and people policies can explain nearly a fifth of the variation in profitability and productivity, compared with 2 per cent for strategy, 1 per cent for quality drives, 1 for new technology and 8 for R&D.

Of course, the sample is small and there are difficulties in measuring the left side of the regression equations in the study, the measures of management input. Job satisfaction is relatively easily measured – proportion of employees surveyed reporting that they are satisfied in about 15 areas, including autonomy, safety, physical conditions, pay, promotion prospects, job security and so on. And this one indication of the success of human resource policies can account for 12 per cent of the difference in profits between companies.

The numbers are impressive enough, but remember that the analysis is based on a sample of relatively small manufacturing companies. Just think how much bigger the pay-off in improved productivity and profitability could be for a bigger business presenting a bigger management challenge, or for a company in a private or public service industry where people are the main input.

Of course, if it were easy to boost profits by 20 per cent by tweaking personnel policies, every business would have done it, rather than just a few. But is it the training programme, the appraisal system, the variety of work or the pay relative to competitors that matters?

I feel the answer is the degree to which individual employees get autonomy and control over their own work. This is vital for job satisfaction, allowing swifter problem-solving and decision-taking, and ensuring relevant information influences decisions quickly. It must be an important part of encouraging employees to internalise the aims and needs of the business.

Research by Bill Lazonick at the University of Massachusetts found productivity gains from the devolution of control to the shop floor. He reported a case study of a failing Massachusetts toy factory which, as a desperate last measure, handed over the running of the business to the women assembly workers. They boosted productivity and quality and turned the company around. But the managers hated losing control so they closed the factory.

This is the real catch. Not only do businesses need to do the right sort of human resource management, they have to want to do it to get it right. Whatever the next piece of research turns up, it will not be a mechanical solution. It will not be enough to say that people are the business's most important asset; managers will have to really mean it.

FOCUS

Beware: Big Brother has an eye on your e-mail

BY CHARLES ARTHUR

GOING ON holiday? You might judge it sensible to leave the keys to your house with a friend – just as a precaution against fire, flood or other acts of a capricious God. But what if that friend was not what they seemed?

What if instead you learnt that your friend could give the keys to the local police to allow them to come into that house and search it; and further that you would never be the wiser, for your "friend" would be instructed not to tell you.

Bizarre though it sounds, this metaphor describes the proposals expected in a government Bill on electronic commerce, due to be published in the next few days by the Department of Trade and Industry. And British businesses are not pleased. Just when they thought they were getting consumers excited about the Internet, and were themselves discovering the possibilities of cutting costs by trading around the world over the electronic network, they have found that the Government wants, like Big Brother in George Orwell's *1984*, to be able to know what they are doing at any time.

Some of the reactions to the proposal are not polite. "Idiotic" is one phrase that has been used, though publicly most are more restrained. Peter Dare, who oversees IBM's development of electronic trading systems in Europe, points out: "The Government can only regulate one country, but electronic commerce is global. You need to solve the problem at a global level."

The problem is that there is a conflict between what governments want to observe in e-commerce, and what consumers and business want to let them see.

Even home computers can encrypt messages. Consumers like that: it gives them confidence that their credit card details are not being redistributed over the Internet when they buy a bunch of roses. For business, it means not having to worry that rivals will read your e-mail.

But to a policeman intercepting an e-mail stream, does an encrypted message signal a paranoid newbie, or a paedophile? Are uncrackable e-mails between a business and a bank legitimate, or money-laundering? On Monday Paul Higdon, of Interpol's Criminal Intelligence directorate, told a conference in London that criminals' use of technology "has outpaced us". What the police want is a short cut; a quick way to crack those codes. It won't come from computers, so it must be created in law.

Battle lines are drawn, and will become clearer when the delayed draft Bill on Electronic Commerce is published, possibly later this week. The Home Office is expected to have won its fight for controls on encryption, particularly to have copies of the keys used for coding messages lodged with a licensed third party, a system known as "key escrow". With a warrant, the Government could access keys and decode messages.

But beyond government, the perception is that that will harm, not help, the development of an international business in which the UK is already lagging. Peter Mandelson's departure from the DTI last December dismayed many in the electronics and computing industry: they felt that he, at least, understood the importance of having the least possible regulation on electronic business. Without him to subdue the Home Office in Cabinet, key escrow looks inevitable.

The US government has already proposed and abandoned key escrow. In 1993 the Bush administration suggested anybody wanting to encrypt their phone calls would have to buy phones fitted with a "Clipper chip", which would give almost uncrackable encryption – but offer government agencies a "back door" for listening-in.

However, Clipper was shown to have myriad flaws, and besides, how many criminal masterminds would buy a phone knowing the government could tap it? Commercially, it bombed.

Mandelson: His departure dismayed computer world

Thus proposals for key escrow on data communications by UK business has drawn weary sighs from those with any knowledge of history. That does not seem to include the Government. "This needs a balance between the ease of access, under lawful control, and the protection of the consumer," said Peter Bonfield, chief executive of BT, in testimony to the House of Commons Select Committee on Trade and Industry last month. "I don't think this is a technology argument."

In other words, catching fraud is not about catching criminals' messages, it is about catching criminals.

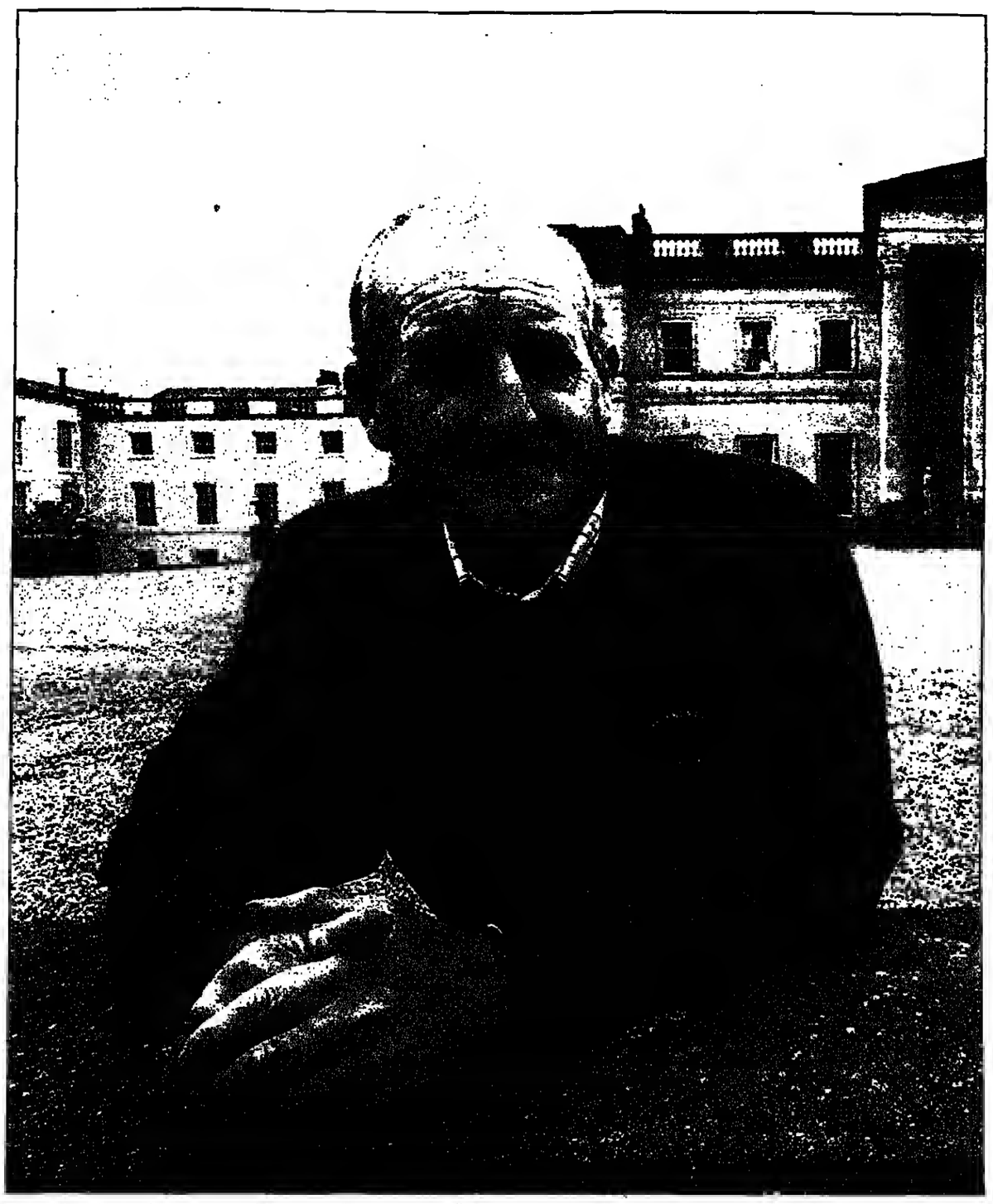
Keith Chapple, managing director of the UK arm of chipmakers Intel, added: "The French were keen to have key escrow. But they realised that it won't help law enforcement ... because one thing you are sure of is that criminals don't obey the law."

ANALYSIS

BY MARY BRAID

Sir John Hall had a dream. He wanted to turn Newcastle into the 'Barcelona of the north', with a company that led the field in every sport from football to ice hockey. So what went wrong?

The moment Sir John met his match



Sir John Hall, the self-styled 'champion of the Geordie nation' *Michael Scott/North News*

THIS WAS a grandiose scheme, even for a multimillionaire who said having the courage to pursue dreams was the sweet secret of success.

In 1995 the ebullient Sir John Hall, controlling shareholder of Newcastle United Football Club, announced creation of the UK's first all-encompassing sporting business empire.

He would support the successes of the team he had resurrected by buying rugby, ice hockey and basketball sides.

Sir John offered vision, imagination, and hyperbole. He said his Newcastle Sporting Club might have 100,000 members by Christmas. British sport would be reinvented through his enterprise, based in the north east, and paralleling the one spawned by the mighty Barcelona football club.

The construction tycoon played shamelessly on regional pride, and long-standing bitterness over the north-south divide. The new Sporting Club, he promised, would play a crucial part in the struggling region's economic regeneration.

Sir John – "I like to be referred to as a capitalist with a social conscience" – even compared "the Geordie nation" to the Catalans of Spain.

In four years John Hall's dream has died. The Newcastle Sporting Club is said to be £9 million in debt and its rugby, ice hockey and basketball teams have been cut loose, or are on the lookout for buyers.

The first crack appeared a year ago, with the Geordies baying for the blood of Douglas Hall, 39, Sir John's son, after he grossly derided the faithful fans and the morality and looks of northern women. To pile injury on his insults to the soccer-mad city, Douglas Hall is now selling the family's controlling share in Newcastle FC to NTL, an American cable company.

Sir John's son, head of the family's Cameron Hall Developments, had been caught in a Spanish brothel with Freddy Shepherd, then chairman of the football club. A tape recording revealed them describing north-east women as "ugly dogs" and United fans as gullible "mugs", for buying tens of thousands of replica Newcastle strips for £50 apiece when they had cost a fiver each from an Asian sweat shop.

But exactly how did Sir John Hall's dream go so sour? During the Thatcher era, his touch seemed golden. He was born into a socialist mining family and spent his twenties underground as a surveyor for the National Coal Board.

He branched into small-time development in 1981 and bought 100 acres of wasteland at Gateshead for £100,000. What followed undoubtedly required imagination. The death of mining and shipbuilding led to long dole queues and violent picketing over mine closures, but Hall was turning his acres of ash into the MetroCentre, the UK's first shopping mall. Enterprise Zone subsidies helped the "miracle".

Hall's vision: rugby, football and basketball under one roof

The MetroCentre opened in 1986 and thrived, a relief not just to Sir John but Mrs Thatcher. It was sure evidence that Thatcherism was working, though it hurt.

A year later Sir John sold the MetroCentre and pocketed an estimated £35m. Then he moved into Wynyard Hall, a grand country estate near Middlesbrough, owned by the Marquis of Londonderry, whose ancestors had controlled the local collieries. The miner's son had bought out the pit owners. Anyone could claw their way up in Maggie's Britain. She bestowed his knighthood in 1991.

So even before he descended like an angel on St James' Park to save the Magpies (Newcastle FC) from bankruptcy and humiliating relegation to the third division, Sir John had a halo of myth. And he burnished it assiduously.

He told reporters the MetroCentre and Wynyard Hall were built on "visionary powers", comparing them to those of Martin Luther King.

His battle for control of Newcastle football club had begun in 1988. The myth maker found a perfect match in football, with its inexhaustible supply of legends and dreams (almost always impossible), its surplus of saccharine sentimentality and the tendency of fans to hero worship.

He said he was "fighting for the Geordie nation". In the giddy years that followed Sir John lured the much-loved Kevin Keegan back from Marbella and early retirement to manage Newcastle's triumphant comeback.

The days of glory began to fade that day in 1997 when Mr Keegan, apparently fed up with Sir John, the Sporting Club, and the transformation of the game into a cash cow, staged his exit from St James' Park by helicopter, to the roared regrets of a broken-hearted crowd.

The stock market flotation of the football club that followed made a fortune for the Hall family, largely at the expense of Newcastle fans, for few City institutions dared invest.

As joint owners of Cameron Hall Developments, Sir John, wife Mae, Douglas and a daughter Linda, shared a 57 per cent stake in Newcastle United. The fans who jostled to buy shares have not made a penny. The shares sold at 135p. This week they were trading at less than a pound.

Sir John, now 67, has spent much of the last year at his luxury home in Spain. He made a brief return as chairman of the football club after his son's fall from grace. There are rumours of ill health. But some believe his heart went out of sport when he realised his Sporting Club was only a pipe dream.

The "man of the people" who regularly popped in for a pre-match pint with the punters at the Strawberry Pub next to St James' Park, had missed the point. The dream failed because Sir John never understood Geordies weren't interested in rugby or ice hockey, never mind basketball. Football was the one and only Geordie sporting passion.

A local businessman agrees. "I think Sir John thought Newcastle would turn out for tiddlywinks, as long as the team was wearing black and white (Newcastle FC's colours)."

One local reporter says: "He didn't even really like football. There are stories of him with his back to the pitch when the Magpies scored."

Malcolm Dix, the club's honorary vice-president, says that is rubbish. "Sir John would get so tensed up during a game that he was almost kicking the ball."

Fans ask how come everyone else knew the Sporting Club was a non-starter, except Sir John? Journalists remember Douglas Hall laying bets that the Newcastle Falcons rugby team would soon be filling the then-36,000-seat St James Park. Attendance averaged between three and four thousand people.

When the Halls bought the Durham Wasps ice hockey side in 1995 they changed the name to the Cobras and shifted "the product" to Newcastle. "There was uproar among Wasps fans," says Simon Rushworth, sports writer for the *Newcastle Evening Chronicle*.

Mr Dix believes the Sporting Club floundered because Sir John failed to bring all the sports onto one site. Environmentalists fought plans for a 55,000-seat football stadium on Leazes Park on the edge of cherished Toon Moor. Plans to move the other sports into the old stadium were shelved and a Barcelona-style multi-sports site never materialised.

City financiers showed no confidence in the Sporting Club. In 1997, at the height of the City's hot, brief, passion for all things football – the Premier league, sale of broadcasting rights and expansion of merchandising had sent football revenues rocketing – Newcastle Football Club was welcomed by the Stock Exchange, but without its sporting siblings.

In Newcastle, few care why the Sporting Club failed. But Sir John's football legacy is a very serious matter. With the Hall family about to trouser an estimated £100m profit from the £3m it cost Sir John to take control of Newcastle United more fans are asking who benefited from the club's flotation in April 1997, other than the Halls and those who were paid vast sums – including bonuses of £300,000 – to mastermind flotation.

"The Halls have benefited far more from the club than the club has from the Halls," says John Regan, secretary of the Newcastle United Independent Supporters Club.

Only a few of the host of clubs floated on the Stock Exchange, including Manchester United and Celtic, have registered share-price rises. Newcastle's showing has been particularly bad. Some say the flotation was overhyped and the club over-valued. Vinay Bedi, of the Newcastle stockbroker Wise Speke, says: "The high original flotation price is almost certainly connected to the problems which followed."

The City sees the company as a corporate governance mess of heroic proportions. Nine directors have left since flotation. Three – including the then-chairman Denis Cassidy – resigned in protest after Douglas Hall and Freddy Shepherd muscled their way back onto the board only months after being forced to resign over the Spanish brothel scandal. Though the vast majority of shareholders were against their reinstatement, a poll vote, based on size of shareholding, easily ensured the men's return.

That bad feeling about the son has also damaged the father. And the image of Sir John generously ploughing his own money into the club is increasingly contested. "I know for a fact it was his own money that went in," says Malcolm Dix. "I saw the cheques."

But more fans – admittedly a minority – snigger at the notion that Sir John put in any of his own cash once the club was his. "He is no Jack Walker," says Mr Regan, referring to the philanthropic mentor of Blackburn Rovers. "He has put in a little of his own money then borrowed. He came into this to make money, and he has."

Some fans now feel Douglas Hall told the truth on the brothel tapes – they are mugs. Gate sales and the season tickets brought £12m a year. The special Platinum Club's 3,000 fans paid £3,000 each to join, the revenues going for a new stand named after Sir John Hall. And, of course, those £50 black and white strips. All that money. And yet so little shareholder power that Douglas Hall and Freddy Shepherd walked back onto the board.

For Mr Dix that misses the point. He says Sir John led the way back to football glory and commercial success. "If Sir John had not got involved in Newcastle United it would not be where it is now," he says. "The north-east owes him a tremendous debt."

Mr Dix had been struggling for years to wrestle control of the club from the old-fashioned, autocratic dynasty under which it was stagnating.

Then Sir John showed an interest, and things began to happen. In the subsequent takeover campaign, the Magpie Five (which included Mr Dix) worked for months, with private detectives and genealogists, to trace "missing" shareholders, often relatives of fans who had bought some of the 2,000 10-shilling shares originally issued by the club in 1892.

The Magpie Group traced the "missing" as far as Australia and bought their shares.

"Sir John led with inspiration," says Mr Dix. "He is a motivator, a catalyst. A man who has a plan or dream and then gets a lot of other people involved to make it happen."

In two weeks the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, Stephen Byers, will receive the Monopolies and Mergers Commission report into Rupert Murdoch's proposed takeover of Manchester United.

If Mr Murdoch, through BSkyB, gets the green light, then the way is open for broadcasters to own football clubs.

NTL, the cable company which recently bought a 6.3 per cent stake in Newcastle United from Cameron Hall Developments, will almost certainly exercise its option to buy a further 51 per cent from the Hall family. Newcastle United will have new owners.

Already Barclay Knapp, 41, the American head of NTL, is huttering up the Magpie fans with the rhetoric taken to the limits by Sir John, one-time champion of "the Geordie nation", now almost permanently resident in Spain.

Again the fans are being assured that this not just about commercial opportunities. NTL is also interested in the game.

Yet Mr Knapp has never been to a football match. That should come as no surprise.

THE PLAYER: BILL GRIMSEY, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF WICKES

Bill's restoration job on a DIY Goliath

BY NICOLA REEVES

PERSONAL DETAILS: basic salary of £234,000 in 1997. Total remuneration including bonus and pension contribution £511,000. Lives in Radlett, Hertfordshire. Drives a BMW 7 Series. Hobbies include riding his Triumph motorcycle.

CHALLENGE: implementing the five-year recovery plan set out at the time of the rights issue in 1996.

This has a number of objectives including: a sweeping reconstruction of the business in terms of relationships with suppliers, employees and customers; investing in a new store format; opening new stores; improving margins; and building the Wickes brand.

The company also needs to rebuild its reputation in the City after an accounting scandal two and a half years ago and an investigation by the Serious Fraud Office. The SFO inquiry continues and officers have yet to decide whether to take action against former Wickes directors, including the chief executive at the time, Henry Sweetbaum.

CORPORATE BACKGROUND: Bill Grimsey was appointed to the board as chief executive in November 1996. He has 27 years' experience, mostly in food retailing and he held a senior position at Tesco.

For five years he was managing director of Park 'N' Shop, based in Hong Kong, the leading supermarket chain in south-east Asia.

Mr Grimsey joined Wickes in 1995, "intrigued by the formula", responsible for the group's South African joint venture, and was appointed managing director of Wickes Building Supplies on 1 July 1996.

STRATEGY: boost margins by increasing the customer and product base. Wickes customers tend to be do-it-yourself buffs and small jobbing builders. They spend only a third of their total DIY expenditure in Wickes, a proportion the company is keen to increase.

Mr Grimsey wants to keep existing customers and he hopes to attract new ones through broadening the product range in paint and wallpapers.

The six new-format stores, with the wider product range, reported sales growth of about 20 per cent in 1998. A further 35 stores will be updated in the current year at a cost of £23m.

By 2001, all 124 stores in the existing group will have been refurbished. Ten new stores are expected to open each year for the next three to four years. Mr Grimsey rejects suggestions of saturation in the DIY market, identifying geographic gaps in the store network.

During 1998, customer service improvements were made and £16.5m was spent on two new distribution centres. The strategic plan is "on track". Overall, Mr Grimsey says, it is "a tough old job but it's exciting and rewarding".

MANAGEMENT STYLE: open and very much hands-on. Mr Grimsey is at home on the shopfloor and is keen to hear the views of staff.

Every month he has breakfast with 12 of his non-management colleagues, such as fork-lift truck drivers and cashiers, and reports back to an operating board. He believes chain store retail companies should have a culture where everyone is aligned to achieving the business goals.

That entails "open communication, encouraging and rewarding staff". This, he says, produces a "dynamic environment" and "is a very powerful mechanism for pulling in the same direction".

Most admires in business: Lord MacLaurin of Knebworth, former chairman and chief executive at Tesco.

CITY VERDICT: Mr Grimsey is described as "fantastically hard-working and enthusiastic". In terms of motivating staff and cutting costs he is said to have done "an excellent job".

But there is a limit on how much further costs can be cut. There is some concern that Wickes will struggle to increase market share profitably against stiff competition from B&Q and Sainsbury's Homebase.

Mr Grimsey remains confident that market share gains will be achieved from a combination of new store openings and refurbishments.

"Every five years you have to refresh the offer in line with changing consumer demands," he says. "I'm a merchant at heart. I am passionate about customers and understanding them."

The heavy store investment programme will inhibit profit growth this year but thereafter Mr Grimsey expects "very exciting profit growth".

Warburg Dillon Read, the company broker, forecasts pre-tax profits of £31m for 2000.

In 1998, Wickes made profits of £24.9m pre-tax compared with a previous loss of £6.5m. The shares are expected to perform in line with the market.

THE INDEPENDENT
Wednesday 3 March 1999

THE CANARY

Overlooked: Elisabeth Murdoch, closer to mum Anna than dad Rupert, looks further behind than ever in the succession stakes at News Corp. With brother Lachlan given new duties in America to add to his Australian brief, there's no doubt who's ahead in the pecking order. Despite her high profile at the Edinburgh TV festival last summer, which many assumed meant she was in effective command at BSkyB, Elisabeth remains firmly Number Two there too. Among those who count, BSkyB chief executive Mark Booth's stock is way up after the successful launch of Sky Digital.

Caught in the Net: What happens when the clogs at the telephone company get into a joint venture with two glamorous cutting-edge media companies? You get LineOne, the Internet joint venture of BT, News International and United Newspapers. LineOne is currently pulled off to the side of the infobahn awaiting some sort of digital AA man. But is there anything to salvage? The notion was that British consumers would stampede for an online service featuring topless page three girls from the Sun plus the exciting content of the Daily Express. With only 70,000 subscribers after two years, the service is an also-ran, a minnow next to Dixon's Freeserve (1 million) and NASDAQ-quoted AOL (550,000). Now the LineOne partners are squabbling over what to do next.

Perk watch: Now everyone will be wanting one. DaimlerChrysler has ordered an Airbus 319 with 46 seats to shuttle executives between its two headquarters in Stuttgart and Detroit. Good choice: It's a sweet flying jet. The Germans have ordered it equipped for all the normal business services (phone, fax, e-mail) and passengers will be expected to work. Not all executives are keen. On Lufthansa they turn out the lights and order you to sleep.

Goldman's ambition: The story so far.... Last autumn Goldman were about to become the richest bankers in the world, then the market collapsed and Goldman lost a bundle of money. The float is back on. Perhaps there will be a revival in the country house market after all. Meanwhile, Goldman's new London command bunker is rising. Structural work is nearly complete on the vast new extension behind the Grade I listed modernist black facade of the former Daily Express building, known to generations of hacks as the black glass Lubyanka. The new building will be connected by an air bridge to Goldman's current lair, the granite money factory on the site redeveloped by Goldman behind the preserved Daily Telegraph facade. Goldman now controls a larger frontage on Fleet Street than any press baron ever did.

MARKET LEADERS PICK THEIR MARKET LEADER

Radio executives: who's on the right wavelength?

Ralph Bernard
Chief Executive
GWR

I ADMIRE the people who have built up their business from scratch. They are usually people who conspire positively to manipulate circumstance to create their product.

Tim Schoonmaker, chief executive of Emap Radio, is one such force. He is a formidable businessman in radio, determined to achieve what he perceives as right for his company. He's oot the forceful type, and is convincing rather than bullish. He knows exactly where be wants his network to be heading and is aided by his refusal to shy away from tough decisions.

Another piooeer of the airwaves is Eddie Blackwell, who is on the board at GWR and steeped in radio. You can't really be successful in radio without that kind of relationship with radio.

Roger Lewis
Managing Director
Classic FM

PASSION AND a real commitment to listeners, with a fan's belief and enthusiasm for the genre – be it oews, sport, speech or music – alongside a can-do, must-do-now attitude (reflecting the immediacy of the medium) all wrapped up in charismatic leadership with the ability to manage the interface betweeo culture and commerce; these are the ingredieots for a great radio executive.

The people who embody these qualities include Ralph Bernard, the chief executive of GWR, who has lived the business from top to bottom, is totally committed to it, and is without doubt the most successful radio executive today.

Second I would line up Richard Park at Capital Radio. He's a hard driven, single-minded man with a passion for music radio and be has steered Capital for more than a decade.

Finally there's Steve Orchard, group programme director of GWR. He's the best radio programmer in the business, because he mixes the science of research with music and fun far better than anyooe I know.

John Pearson
Chief Executive
Virgin Radio

THERE ARE a lot of extremely clever and hard-working people in the radio industry. I feel very much in debt to all the other people I will be sharing this page with who have been responsible for a renaissance in listening and revenue over the past five years.

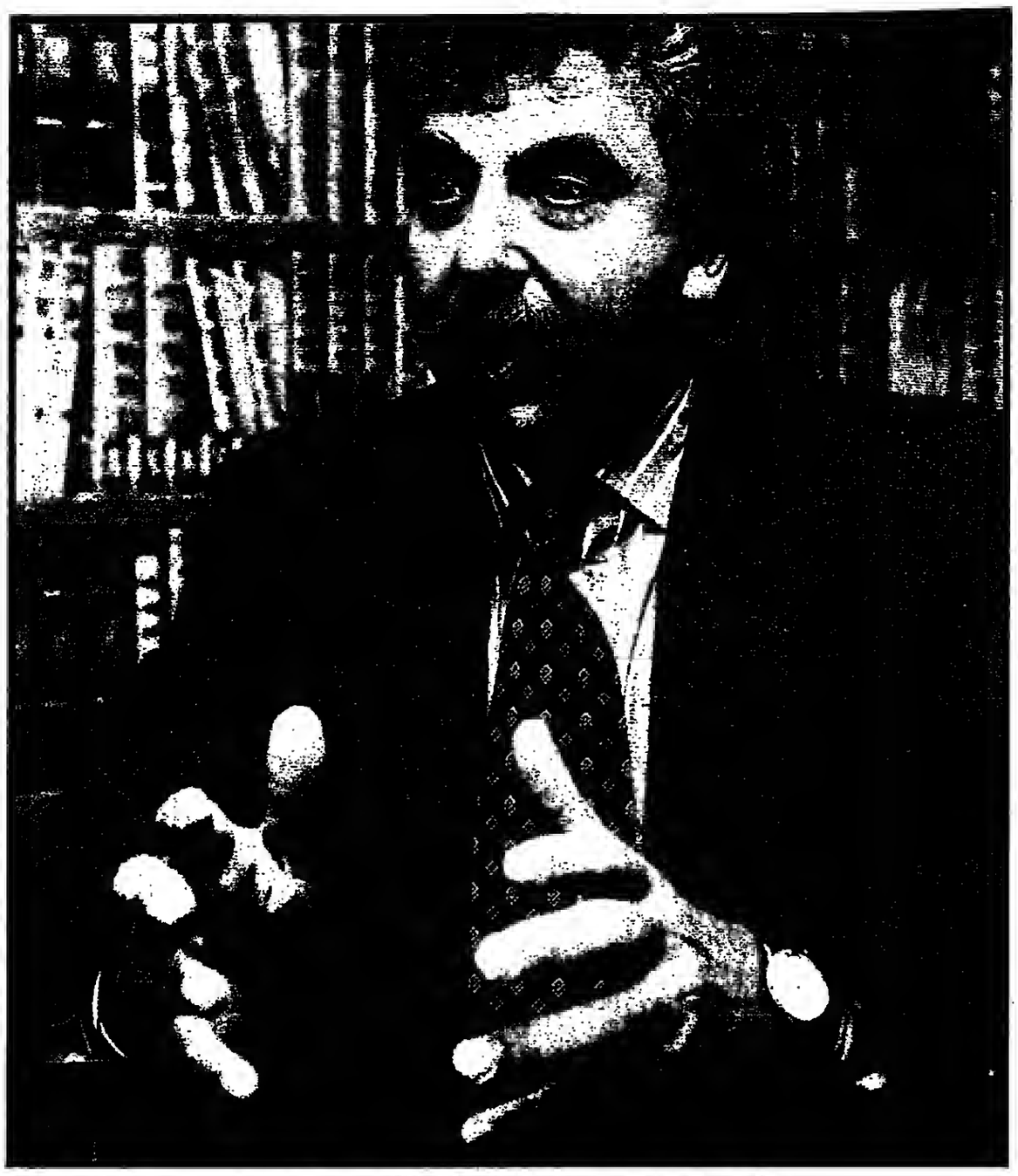
From my point of view, the people I respect the most in the industry are the senior management and staff of this radio station, including, of course, the inimitable Chris Evans. I do have good reason. For me each one represents the core reasons for the industry's success; enthusiasm, fun and genuine passion for the medium.

Jason Bryant
Development Director
Talk Radio

I WOULD single out Ralph Bernard for the vision he has shown in transforming GWR into a major media business. He has taken risks but seen them rewarded, particularly at Classic FM. More bravely, be has led the development of commercial digital radio.

Richard Huntiogford at Chrysalis has skilfully built a tremendous business through acquisition and licence awards, while Tom Hunter at Liverpool's Radio City stands out for his brilliant understanding of the market and team-building skills.

Elsewhere, I had better mentioo my boss Kelvin MacKenzie in case nobody else does, and Chris Evans at Virgin who have both giveo oational commercial radio a tremendous boost in profile. Finally, let's not forget that the BBC retains half of all radio listening and some talented individuals at the top. Roger Mosey at 5 Live is undoubtedly the best I have come across in the public sector.



Ralph Bernard, admired even by industry rivals for his ability to keep the medium in the headlines

Jenny Abramsky
Director
BBC Radio

ANY outstanding executive or boss would have to know how to create a station which related to the audience. Ooe such man is Jimmy Gordon. His years of experience enable him to recognise good radio and how to make it.

Other qualities I look for would be a grasp of bow important talent is and an ability to ourture it. Radio is about quality entertainment, and any statioo looks to its presenters to help pull in the audience.

Jim Moir of Radio 2 has this ability and a great sense of what makes showbusiness. It would he difficult to talk about figureheads in the industry without mentioning Chris Evans and the sheer innovation he has brought to his station.

Richard Findlay
Chief Executive
Scottish Radio Holdings

I WOULD say that to stand out in radio these days you oeed a vision, a plan for the future.

The man I most admire is Jimmy Gordon. Admittedly, he is the chairman here at SRH but he was in at the beginning when be started up Radio Clyde. Since then he has scarcely swerved in his beliefs, never compromised his integrity or forgotten the public service aspects of commercial radio, which can sometimes get lost or confused.

Michael Connolly
Chief Executive
Independent Radio Group

THE MAN I most admire in radio at the momeot is Terry Smith, chairman of Emap Radio.

He was the founding father of Emap Radio and has done an extremely skilful job in organising it. He is a genius at building big radio because he is talented, bright and not afraid to take risks.

At the same time, the risks be takes are controlled. He uses his judgement to evaluate the situation and that judgement has been honed through his long and successful career in radio. He's shrewd and well versed in the ways of radio. A canny Yorkshireman and a flexible, capable radio executive. He is a figurehead in the industry.

David Mansfield
Chief Executive
Capital Radio

RADIO HAS beeo the fastest growing advertising medium over the past five or six years and has increased its share of advertising from 2 per cent to oearly 6. This is largely thanks to Douglas McArthur, managing director of the Radio Advertising Bureau. We couldn't operate without it – or this man at the centre of all of these changes. He is the linchpin for the two industries and single-handed made commercial radio the success story that it is. He possesses those qualities essential to any radio executive: he's very bright, he's his own man, he's ruthless when it comes to achieving what he wants.

He's a wonder – courageous, a lateral thinker, a doer.

Ours is a tough market. Radio used to be the medium of last resort but things have changed. The catalyst for change was when we all decided that a customer-focused approach was the way forward. Many radio owners are inward-looking but Douglas convinced us to bow to the customer.

Tim Schoonmaker
Chief Executive
Emap Radio

THE RADIO man of the moment has to be Paul Brown of the Commercial Radio Companies Association. I choose him because I think he has the most difficult job in radio and he does it with great alacrity.

He has the task of pulling together all the disparate views of the chief executives in radio and then putting them to the government for their approval. The only way he can possibly have managed this is through his singleness of vision. I think that's the most important characteristic for a radio executive in radio at the moment, given the changes that are happening.

Radio will be unrecognisable in teo years' time: digital will be the medium then so distributioo will have changed, relationships with advertisers will have changed and the sheer oumber of channels will mean a very different radio service. And if you don't have vision, you're oot going to be ready. I think all of the big names in radio have visioo but, in the same breath, we could all do with some more!

Richard Huntingford
Chief Executive
Chrysalis Radio

I think it's vital for those who have been in radio for a long time and who have worked their way to the top to retain a passion and enthusiasm for the medium. It's so easy to become jaded.

My managing director, Phil Riley, has managed to keep his original love and fascination with radio. It is important because it keeps you on your toes. Combine this with strong leadership and team-building qualities and you have your ideal radio executive.

Team-building skills are very important in an industry which comprises people of many natures and skills – the executives, the creatives, the engineers, the presenters – and it is extremely important to be able to unite your people.

Radio is a people industry, so anyooe who wants to do well has to be good with people – you should be a good team leader with drive, charisma and personality. And you have to be inspirational. That's the key.

INTERVIEWS BY SALLY CHATTERTON

BOOK OF THE WEEK

Gear up for the downshift

The Caterpillar Doesn't Know
by Kenneth Hey and Peter Moore
(Simon & Schuster, £20)

SO MUCH has beeo written about the inability of businesses to engage their workforces for any significant time that the initial reaction to this book may be: "Oh, woe is me."

But that would do it a disservice. Yes, it starts with plenty of comment about how the "more, better, faster" mentality that drove the communities of wealth through decades of success has now run headloog into a personal reassessment that "enough is enough". But this is just by way of context.

The real message from Hey and Moore – the partners in the US market intelligence firm Inferential Focus – is not just that more people are apparently giving up high-flying careers in the search for "balance", but that customers of all sorts are expecting companies to behave differeotly.

So seoior executives should introduce greater flexibility, allowing individuals to continue cootributing while spending time with their families or other outside pursuits. They should view this flexible approach as the harbinger of bountiful business opportunities.

One of the most obvious examples cited as evidence of "the oew reality" is how McDonald's trumpets its low cost meals while Starbuck's attracts queues for its premium-priced coffees.

One is struggling to be the low-cost provider in the old marketing game, while the other is offering "a reward, a moment of quiet, a solution in the context of a world out of control".

The book is not as touchy-feely as it sounds. Hey and Moore are asserting that companies that think they oeed only produce top-quality products or services risk missing the boat. The book wraps its thinking in such phrases as "discovery solutions" and "response purchase", but offers further indications of the case for responding to individuals' changing priorities.

After all, Hey and Moore point out, while people economise on transport by buying second-hand cars and keeping them longer, they are also spending heavily oo such items as prepared salads. Between 1989 and 1996 this market grew from $8.2m to $1.1bn. "Consumers will pay for solutions," they say.

It is now possible to carve significant niches with specialised services or products solving problems that did not exist before, such as both pareots working long hours. The mark of success is to get there before the opposition – which means anticipating consumer trends. One of the keys is to realise that coosumers and employees are essentially the same people.

The book's title comes from a business rethink by Mort Meyerson, former head of EDS and Perot Systems: "The caterpillar doesn't know that he'll come out as a butterfly. All he knows is that he's alone, it's dark, and it's a little scary."

ROGER TRAPP

MY BIGGEST MISTAKE

I was slow to take charge

MY BIGGEST mistake was that I spent so many years oot recognising my talents. For most of my early working life I had assumed my vocation was to be a good secretary, and I felt frustrated when I was not taken seriously.

In my last company, a plastics manufacturer, it dawned on me that I was quite a vocal person. I was taking on more and more responsibility, looking after a £1m sales account and running the company's advertising and marketing activities

As well as that I was handling my responsibilities as PA to the managing director. One evening at 7 I looked out at the car park and noticed that my car was the only oon-company car still there.

The next morning I issued an ultimatum to my boss. Either he gave me the job title I deserved and rewards to go with the position, or I moved on. I was subsequently appointed commercial manager, then commercial director. I had a good mentor at the company, who told me: "Don't hide your light under a bushel." I left after 10 years because I needed a oew challenge.

Jan Reynolds is the managing director of Bristol match manufacturer Octavius Hunt. The company has 45 staff and an annual turnover of £2m. The MoD and the Australian army are clients

I came to Octavius Hunt in 1989 without a job description. I had an empty desk and my work evolved. There were no formal systems or procedures. Chemring bought the company in 1991, but it operated autonomously. They allowed their companies to breathe.

I was given good advice by the president of an American account I used to look after: "The art of a good manager is to not be missed when you are not there." That taught me about delegation.

My promotions were gradual and not something I particularly sought. My predecessor was an engineer, so the company was production-led. Since I've taken over, it's been sales-led, which is how it should be.

I've had to become more of a lateral thinker and be more enterprising. I used to be a bit of a plodder hut oow I have to look beyond the immediate future because the company has to grow.

It's always been successful and profitable and the maxim, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it" applies. But we want to expand our research and development department. We already manufacture smoke pesticides and now we want to develop scented smokes and security smokes. When the position of managing director was first offered to me, I took some time to think it over. I had always seen myself as a number two. I thought, 'I've oever failed at anything and I don't intend to start now'. It was a huge responsibility but I've oever looked back.

RACHELLE THACKRAY

Fund superstars may find their lost sparkle

JONATHAN DAVIS

ONE OF the most striking features of the investment climate is that so many highly regarded professional investment managers are performing very badly, not just by their standards but in absolute terms. Even George Soros and Julian Robertson, the two biggest names in the global fund business, have done pretty badly over 12 months. And there are some equally surprising reversals of fortune in the UK market.

In the 12 months to the end of January, three of the best known equity growth funds, Schroder UK Enterprise (managed by Jim Cox), Fidelity Special Situations (run by Anthony Bolton) and Gartmore UK Smaller Companies (run by Frank Manduca), produced negative returns in a period when the market as a whole has risen. (The Footsie up 9.4 per cent; the All-Share up 9.2 per cent over the same period).

Other well-known fund managers who have been feeling the draught from indifferent performance include Tony Dye of PDFM (the loogstanding bear of Wall Street) and two of Perpetual's star fund managers, Stepben Whittaker and Neil Woodford. Perpetual being among the most successful fund management companies of the past decade and priding itself on its track record of good performance, its tribulations must be particularly galling. What is one to make of this humbling of the superstars? One natural reaction might be a dose of *schadenfreude*. Successful investment managers are very well paid for their labours and some people will doubtless find enjoyment in observing such figures struggling to justify their corn.

Others may conclude that fund managers are no different from other professionals. In a high-pressure business, such as fund management, where there are plenty of keen young Turks waiting to fill your seat, it may be these established names have simply lost the plot. But it has to be more than coincidence that so many of those who have recently lost a little of their lustre follow a style of investment that has similar features. Several who have recently underperformed the market or their peers have one of two things in common. Either they have traditionally had a bias towards smaller companies or their methods are rooted in so-called value investing, which favours shares that appear cheap over shares which are growing or moving fast. Both styles are out of fashion. Smaller companies as a class have seriously underperformed those of the largest capitalisation shares.

And by refusing to pay what would be historically high prices for today's best performing shares, many value investors have suffered from the increasingly narrow focus of the market's behaviour over the past 18 months to two years on just a few fashionable sectors. They are telecoms, pharmaceuticals, utilities, anything with an Internet association. The stock market's continued strength, bere and to a lesser extent in America, has now become dangerously concentrated on a handful of large and well-capitalised companies. They operate in international markets, which are today's stock market darlings, but they trade on multiples of earnings and cash flow inordinately high by conventional standards.

Poor fund manager performances could simply be a matter of investment style

We are seeing a momentum-driven market that no self-respecting value investor could find appealing. Most gain recorded by the Footsie index in the past year has been focused on a few companies. It is unhealthy and normally an indication that some market correction is overdue. While the fund managers are sweating over their continued poor performance, what should their investors do? Search for a rival fund with a more appealing track record? Or wait for the return of better (or more normal) times? The answer is probably neither. It may be better to give more money to the very good fund managers who are having a rough time. History suggests that these moments are one of the few times when it makes sense to look for outstanding individual skills.

Although most fund managers never really earn their money over time (which is the root reasoo for putting a good chunk of your money into index-tracking funds), there are some exceptional talents who can and do justify the fees they charge.

The problem is that it is usually far from easy either to spot the real stars in advance, or to find an opportunity to buy into their expertise at a price that makes sense.

No really exceptional professional investors will change styles just because the market is temporarily out of synch with their methods, so it follows that one of the few times when you can profit from their talent is when the market appears to have left them behind. The hard fact is that every genuinely first-class investor, from George Soros and Warren Buffett down, has experienced periods of awful returns by comparison with the short-term performances of his peers.

It is silly to judge a professional investor by performance over anything less than three years. What matters is whether you can analyse the reasons for the underperformance and see if it is a matter of style (which is cyclical) or something fundamentally wrong.

You can safely bet that most of the fallen stars will be back among the leaders before long. If you can buy into their skills at an attractive discount (eg through an investment trust such as Anthony Bolton's Fidelity Special Values), now is the time.

One of the great bargains of last year was the chance to buy into Mark Mobius' emerging markets fund at a 34 per cent discount. There will be others of similar attraction as long as the current market conditions prevail.

Should you invest in... information technology?

BY KEIRON ROOT

ONE OF the difficulties with assessing information technology stocks is that they do not form a single sector. The bulk are split between electronic and electrical equipment and the catch-all support services sector. Most technology fund managers will also have a significant exposure to telecoms companies as well.

A second problem is determining which IT stocks are actually going to make any money. "The problem with the market in IT stocks has been its predictability of earnings," commeots John Pullar-Strecker, head of the global technology desk at Aberdeen Asset Management.

"If you have a slowdown in spending on software, because that spending has been deferred, then earnings are going to be very uneven."

But, he says, "the key to the IT sector is global development. You have to ask what does a UK company have to offer to the world, or is it just going to concentrate on the UK or Europe? If you are looking for global companies that are based in the UK, the obvious one is ARM Holdings. It produces specialist microprocessors for equipment that needs low power.

"The company has a global preseoce although that is already reflected in its share price. Its technology is not exactly unique, but competition is sufficiently small for it to hold a strong position, supplying to companies like Nokia and Ericsson. That is the kind of company that is going to be successful, providing it can manage its growth."

Investors who can choose, therefore, tend to concentrate on smaller, growth stocks. "The ones that are particularly like that in my portfolio at the moment are Royalblue and DCS Groop," says Nigel Thomas, manager of ABN Amro's UK Growth Fund. "Royalblue is definitely my best pick. It is in helpdesk and financial software and growing at 30 per cent per annum. Its p/e is up there with the rest of the sector, hut it is not exorbitant and it has just had some excellent figures."

Thomas argues that Royalblue has the sort of attractive market niche that investors should be looking for.

"Bill Gates is on record as saying that the helpdesk software market will show annual growth at 25 to 30 per cent for the next five years, and Royalblue is a major player in that market," be says.

"This is software that can handle inquiries and link that to a client company's systems. There is a general convergence of software and systems on a global scale so helpdesks can be based in Dublin or Bangalore or wherever."

Nigel Thomas's other current star has a more specific focus. "DCS is more involved with software for financial dealers. It meets my criteria of looking for good companies that are not on excessive ratings. It is also important that these are not 'blue sky' companies – you are looking at actual businesses," be says.

But what if you want to take a punt on some of Thomas's 'blue sky' companies? "JSB Software Technologies is an AIM stock that provides access control software, for example, to dealing services to prevent dealers doing their own thing and it is actually making profits from a former business." Thomas says.

"I think the best Internet service provider is Easynet [also AIM listed], which is a UK business but is also in Germany and other parts of Europe.

"Its strength is that it is attacking the corporate market, signing up a client and helping them develop their website and then developing other services from there."

Choosing the right hi-tech stock to invest in is not child's play

SHAREWATCH

BUY

Nyomed Amersham's (386p) earnings should grow by 13 per cent during the next five years, says Morgan Stanley Dean Witter, which has upgraded the shares to a strong buy, with a target price of 525p. Nycomed is well placed to benefit from the growing tendency to outsource pharmaceutical research and development over the next decade, it adds.

The industrial logic behind the BTR Siebe (269p) merger is sound, says Charles Stanley, and benefits will be apparent over time.

SELL

Although WH Smith's (528p) profits should grow strongly during the course of the next two years, it could soon be time to sell into strength, Henderson Crosthwaite says.

In the longer-term, there is a question mark on the profitability of the High Street stores (50 per cent of group profit) which even fast-growing online services would only partly offset.

Sell South African Breweries (473p), says SG Equity Research, ooting that economic and policitical risks will impact on the shares much more than SAB's growth record in local markets.

NO PAIN, NO GAIN: OUR MAN'S PORTFOLIO

Allied seems a permanent guest in the Last Chance saloon

DEREK PAIN

ALLIED DOMECQ has been a Footsie under-achiever since it was created 40 years ago by a merger of three of the leading brewers of the time.

Until early January there were faint signs, not for the first time, that the retailing and spirit group was at last getting its act together. The shares edged ahead, nudging 600p.

But, true to form, Allied once again dashed hopes of a significant revival. A poor trading statement had City analysts scurrying for their calculators as, once again, profit forecasts were pulled back.

About £590m is now expected this year, which would compare with £602m in 1997. Allied management has turned supping in the Last Chance saloon into an art form – it has achieved the impossible, permanent residence.

Other assorted setbacks in past *years, ranging from a £147m foreign* exchange fiasco to the ill-timed Domecq acquisition, as well as an astonishing inability to grow the business, should have destroyed hopes that Allied will ever emerge as a Footsie pacesetter.

And the group's dismal failure to respond to the creation of the Diageo spirits behemoth merely adds to *the catalogue of management short*comings.

Wise old stock market players are often reluctant to base a longish-term investment on takeover hopes. But Allied must be the exception. It has a fine array of spirit brands (Ballantine and Teacher Scotch whiskies and Beefeater gin) and *one of the best pub estates in the* country. If ever there was the proverbial sitting duck it is Allied. Indeed, but for the nagging market feeling that such a vulnerable group will eventually be taken out of its misery, the shares would probably be even more depressed.

There is just a chance that the chairman, Sir Christopher Hogg, will *roll out a demerger scheme to head* off any threatened takeover strike. A strong case has been made for splitting the group into two stand-alone companies, retailing (an assortment of franchise operations and *the pubs) and the distilling business.* Allied has in the past turned its face against a demerger but there are *suspicions that the latest setback* and the dismal share price could encourage the plan to be dusted down. Pumping its spirits operations into a similar business would be another form of demerger. A further possibility is a share buyback but such an exercise, I think, rarely has much impact on a share price – ask Halifax shareholders.

*Although a demerger would en*hance shareholder value it would be unwise to base any share purchase on such a possibility. It would be even more daft to bank on anything spectacular on the trading front. No, the *reason for taking a chance* on Allied is, quite simply, it will be shocked out of its slumbers by old-fashioned takeover action. Bids of around 650p a share could be expected, against the dismal 482.5p prevailing that now values the group at £5bn.

There is little doubt the Allied parts are worth more than the whole. A break-up strike from a corporate raider or a *joint bid with the* various parties interested in different parts of the group are possible *despite* the seeming protection of that £5bn capitalisation.

Allied has another attraction. It offers a 6.2 per cent dividend yield and there is no doubt Sir Christopher would be rather reluctant to cut the payout. At a time of falling interest rates the struggling high yielders are accorded special investment appeal. With the dividend expected to be held the yield offers a *handy* prop for the shares.

I know that over the years Allied *has on many* occasions been tipped on recovery and bid hopes. And many commentators have said the sad under-performance must one day end.

They've ended up with egg on their face. I could suffer the same fate. But with the shares so near their 10-year low the Allied underferment should be brought to an end.

INVESTING FOR INCOME

Thinking small, where investors tend to be very loyal, can lead to picking up large rewards *Philip Meech*

Is Futureworld a micro economy?

BY IAIN MORSE

IS MICRO investment the way ahead? Tony Blair seems to think so. In a speech to the National Council of Voluntary Organisations earlier this year, the Prime Minister praised the benefits of "credit unions, community loan funds, development trusts and social banks like the Triodos Bank".

Micro what? Malcolm Lynch, a solicitor who specialises in the field, explains: "This is a growing sector which offers the ethically and ecologically minded the chance to invest across a spectrum of projects. Some offer a high social [as opposed to financial] return, others compete against non-ethical alternatives."

Unlike unit trusts or bank deposit accounts, these are not standard retail investments. Most either give poorer returns or are far riskier.

"You should invest in these only when you have satisfied your other financial needs such as pension provision, or income," says Mr Lynch.

Some are provident mutual societies, which sell "shares" giving member status to their owners, including the right to vote and influence policy.

The Aston Reinvestment Trust, for example, has already raised £800,000 against a target of £3.5m by 2000. You can invest £250 to £20,000, with 90 days' notice needed to withdraw your cash. ART relends in the Aston area, providing capital for business start-ups and community projects.

The *Sheffield Employment Bond* aims to raise £3m and requires a minimum deposit of £100. The interest is invested in creating jobs in Leeds and investors are guaranteed a return of their capital after five years.

The Wind Fund, sponsored by Triodos Bank, is an ecological fund that aims to finance the development of electricity using wind-driven turbines. The fund has already paid for turbines in Scotland and Cumbria.

Simon Jenkins of Triodos Bank says: "These investments are about putting your money where your mouth is. It attracts those who want a close relationship with the firms or other enterprises they are investing in."

Elsewhere, Parry People's Movers, set up by an engineer, John Parry, to develop cheap urban transport for large Third World cities, now has shares traded on Ofex. This is an exchange for shares in small, unquoted firms seeking private venture capital.

"We have a very loyal band of investors," says Mr Parry. "They have complete and open access to our factory whenever they wish. Many also offer to help the firm in small ways, by making a visit here or gathering some information there.

"Projects of this kind need a little *more* thought than is normal when you make an investment. You balance narrowly defined prospects of financial gain or loss, with far broader moral considerations.

"These often come down to the simple question: what kind of world do you want to live in?"

There are also signs that a new, distinct group of ethically and ecologically minded entrepreneurs are seeking funds from like-minded investors often by offering shares in privately owned, unlisted companies.

Jamie Hartzell, a director of the Ethical Property Company, says: "We are seeking investors to finance the development of office and business centres for the voluntary and co-operative sectors.

"Our management style is transparent; we are trying to offer an ethical property investment paying dividends and offering capital growth, while at the same time charging low and flexible rents to our tenants."

Malcolm Lynch, 0113 2429600; Aston Reinvestment Trust, 0121 3592444; Sheffield Employment Bond, 0114 275 5721; Triodos Bank, 0117 973 9339

BEST SAVINGS RATES

INSTANT ACCESS BRANCH ACOUNTS

	TELEPHONE	ACCOUNT	NOTICE OR TERM	DEPOSIT	% GROSS	% APR	INTEREST PAID
Tesco	0845 7104010	Tesco Savings	Instant	£1	4.50%	4.50%	Y/y
Woolwich	0800 222200	Card Saver	Instant	£50	4.75%	4.75%	Y/y
Teachers' BS	01202 843550	Bullion	Instant	£500	4.30%	4.35%	1/2Y/y
Halifax	01422 333333	Instant Saver	Instant	£500	4.75%	4.75%	Y/y

POSTAL/TELEPHONE ACCOUNTS – NO NOTICE

Egg	0845 6000292	Savings	Post/Phone	£1	6.00%	6.00%	Y/y
Virgin Direct	0845 6101020	Deposit	Telephone	£1	5.75%	5.75%	Y/y
Sun Bank	01438 744500	Direct Postal	Post	£500	5.80%	5.60%	Y/y
Safeway	0800 995995	Direct Savings	Post/Phone	£1,000	5.70%	5.70%	Y/y

NOTICE ACCOUNTS AND BONDS

Dunfermline BS	01383 627727	Dunfermline Dir.	28 Day (P)	£25,000	5.90%	5.90%	Y/y
Scarborough BS	01723 500616	40 Day Access	40 Day	£1,000	6.65%	6.65%	Y/y
Standard Life Bank	0345 555657	50 Day Notice	50 Day (T)	£1	5.45%	5.45%	Y/y
Northern Rock	0845 6006767	Save Direct 50	50 Day (B)	£10,000	6.75%	6.75%	Y/y

CHEQUE ACCOUNTS

Sun Bank	01438 744505	HICA	None	£1,000	4.25%	4.25%	Y/y
AMC Bank	0181 4472040	HICA	Instant	£5,000	5.25%	5.35%	Q/y
Leeds & Holbeck BS	0800 0728738	Albion Cheque	Instant	£5,000	5.00%	5.00%	Y/y
Chelsea BS	0800 429429	Classic Postal	Instant	£10,000	4.25%	4.25%	Y/y

FIXED RATE BONDS

Bristol & West	0117 979 2222	Double Guarantee	18.8.99	£5,000	5.55%F	5.55%	Y/y
Investec Bank (UK)	0171 597 4131	Year Bond	1 Year	£2,001	5.50%F	5.50%	O/M
First Active	0845 6013572	Gratd windfall	2 Year	£1,000	6.00%F	6.00%	Y/y
Hinckley & Rugby BS	0800 774499	Fixed Rate Bond	5 Year	£5,000	5.75%F	5.75%	Y/y

FIRST TESSAS

Lambeth BS	0800 225221	5 Year	£3,000	6.95%	6.95%	Y/y
Yorkshire BS	0800 378836	5 Year	£100	6.85%	6.85%	Y/y
Julian Hodge Bank	01222 220800	5 Year	£250	6.75%	6.75%	Y/y
Mansfield BS	01246 202055	5 Year	£500	6.75%	6.75%	Y/y

FOLLOW ON TESSAS

Barclays Bank	0800 400100	5 Year	£9,000	7.00%	7.00%	Y/y
Lambeth BS	0800 225221	5 Year	£9,000	6.95%	8.95%	Y/y
Yorkshire BS	0800 378836	5 Year	£9,000	8.95%	6.95%	Y/y
Mansfield BS	01246 202055	5 Year	£500	6.75%	6.75%	Y/y

OFFSHORE ACCOUNTS (GROSS)

Cheshire Guernsey	01481 726885	Instant Offshore	None	£10,000	6.20%	6.20%	Y/y
Cheshire Guernsey	01481 726885	Offshore 60	60 Day	£10,000	8.60%	8.60%	Y/y
Northern Rock Guernsey	01481 714600	Offshore 90	90 Day	£10,000	6.95%	6.95%	Y/y
Alliance & Leicester Intnl	01624 663566	Notice 180	180 Day	£50,000	7.15%	7.15%	Y/y

GUARANTEED INCOME BONDS (NET)

GE Financial Assurance	0181 3803388	1 Year	£20,000	4.15%FN	Y/y
GE Financial Assurance	0181 3803388	2 Year	£10,000	3.90%FN	Y/y
Countrywide Assured	0800 838020	3 Year	£10,000	4.00%FN	Y/y
Countrywide Assured	0800 838020	4 Year	£10,000	4.30%FN	Y/y
Countrywide Assured	0800 838020	5 Year	£10,000	4.10%FN	Y/y

NATIONAL SAVINGS ACCOUNTS (GROSS)

INVESTMENT ACCOUNTS	1 Month	£20	3.65%	Y/y
		£500	3.80%	Y/y
		£2,500	3.90%	Y/y
		£5,000	4.00%	Y/y
		£10,000	4.20%	Y/y
		£25,000	4.45%	Y/y
		£50,000	4.95%	Y/y
INCOME BONDS w.e.f 10/4/99	3 Month	£2,000	4.95%	M/y
		£25,000	5.20%	M/y
CAPITAL BONDS Series 0	5 Year	£100	4.25%F	O/M
FIRST OPTION BONDS	12 Month	£1,000	4.50%F	Y/y
		£20,000	4.75%F	Y/y
PENSIONERS GUARANTEED INCOME BOND Series 8	5 Year	£500	4.25%F	M/y
49th ISSUE (tax free)	5 Year	£100	3.25%F	O/M
15TH INDEX-LINKED (tax free)	5 Year	£100	1.65%F + inflation	O/M
CHILDREN'S BOND Issue M (tax free)	5 Year	£25	4.25%F	O/M

AER=Annual Equivalent Rate. B=Operated by post and telephone. F=Fixed rate (all other rates are variable). N=Net rate. O/M=Interest paid on maturity. P=Operated by post. T=Operated by telephone. All rates subject to change without notice. Please check all rates and terms before investing. All rates (except Guaranteed Income Bonds) are shown gross.
Figures compiled on: 22nd February 1999

Source: MoneyFacts

CRITICAL ILLNESS COVER

Monthly premiums for £50,000 sum assured for 25 years, non smokers

MEN		WOMEN	
AGE 30		AGE 30	
Guardian	12.00	Pegasus	12.07
Permanent	12.77	Legal & General	13.60
Pegasus	12.92	Scottish Provident	13.85
Legal & General	13.00	Permanent	14.21
AGE 35		AGE 35	
Swiss Life	16.19	Legal & General	17.00
Guardian	17.70	Scottish Provident	17.17
Permanent	18.20	Swiss Life	17.78
Legal & General	18.50	Canada Life	17.80
AGE 40		AGE 40	
Swiss Life	25.72	Scottish Provident	23.20
Permanent	27.16	Pegasus	23.52
Legal & General	27.40	Legal & General	24.50
Scottish Provident	27.59	Canada Life	24.80
AGE 45		AGE 45	
Scottish Provident	40.16	Scottish Provident	31.35
Swiss Life	40.48	Zurich Life	31.57
Canada Life	43.40	Canada Life	34.40
Guardian	44.45	BUPA	38.58
AGE 50		AGE 50	
Scottish Provident	58.96	Zurich Life	43.99
Canada Life	61.80	Scottish Provident	46.35
Swiss Life	62.11	Canada Life	48.20
CGU Life	75.90	CGU Life	58.25

Source: Term Direct

COMPULSORY PURCHASE ANNUITIES

£100,000 purchase, guaranteed five years, monthly in advance

LEVEL
SINGLE LIFE

	MALE 60	MALE 65	MALE 70
Friends Provident	7,841	8,925	10,396
Sun Life	7,579	8,741	10,305
Legal & General	7,568	8,636	10,010
	FEMALE 60	FEMALE 65	FEMALE 70
Friends Provident	7,092	7,892	9,039
Canada Life	7,069	7,888	9,063
Norwich Union	6,942	7,715	8,836

JOINT LIFE, 2/3 WIDOW'S BENEFIT

	MALE 60 FEMALE 55	MALE 65 FEMALE 60	MALE 70 FEMALE 65
Friends Provident	6,598	7,190	8,004
Canada Life	6,566	7,182	8,038
Norwich Union	6,496	7,080	7,902

INDEX-LINKED
SINGLE LIFE

	MALE 65	MALE 65	MALE 70
Sun Life	5,554	6,718	8,305
Prudential	5,718	6,700	7,998
Standard Life	5,520	6,636	8,100
	FEMALE 60	FEMALE 65	FEMALE 70
Equitable Life	4,939	5,673	6,697
Prudential	5,047	5,662	6,800
Canada Life	4,773	5,621	6,814

JOINT LIFE, 2/3 WIDOW'S BENEFIT

	MALE 60 FEMALE 55	MALE 65 FEMALE 60	MALE 70 FEMALE 65
Prudential	4,645	5,225	5,986
Equitable Life	4,554	5,149	5,955
Sun Life	4,170	4,944	5,897

Source: Annuity Direct

CORPORATE BONDS

COMPANY	FUND	TARGET YIELD, %	RISK RATING	F/E GEARING %	ANNUAL FEE, %
Perpetual	Mthly Inc	8.50	L/M	3.15	1.25
Aberdeen	Fixed Int	8.20	N/A	4.25	1.25
Framlington	European	8.00	L/M	3.75	1.00
M&G	High Yield	9.53	L/M	Nil	1.25
Schroders	High Yield	7.00	L	3.25	1.00
Jupiter	Corp Bond	6.60	N/A	5.00	1.00
Legal & Gen	Corp Bond	6.25	L	Nil	0.50
Save & Pros	High Inc	6.16	L	Nil	0.75
Fidelity	Moneybldr	6.17	L	Nil	0.70
Virgin Direct	Inc Trust	6.00	L	Nil	0.70
MAM	High Yield	6.13	L/M	2.25	1.00
Guinness Flight	Value Bond	4.97	L	Nil	0.65

Source: Baronsworth Investment Services

BEST BORROWERS RATES

MORTGAGES

FIXED RATES – WITHOUT REDEMPTION TIE-IN

	TELEPHONE	RATE	PERIOD	MAX LTV	FEE	INCENTIVE	REDEMPTION PENALTY
Nationwide BS	0800 302010	5.39%	2 years	90%	£95	Refund of valuation fee – no MIP	1st 2yrs: 4/3 months interest
Leeds & Holbeck BS	0800 0725726	4.99%	1.5.02	90%	£295	-	None
West Bromwich BS	0121 5806404	5.25%	30.4.04	95%	£295	Free ASU for 1 year	1st 5 yrs: 5% of sum repaid

FIXED RATES – WITH REDEMPTION TIE-IN

Northern Rock	0845 6050500	3.49%	01.4.01	95%	£295	Free ASU for 6 months & Advs up to 90% – no MIP	1st 6yrs: 6-3% of sum rep-aid
Scarborough BS	0990 133149	3.90%	3 years	95%	£295	-	1st 5 years: 5% of sum repaid
Bristol & West	0800 119955	5.25%	01.3.03	90%	£295	-	to 28.2.04 4.5% of sum repaid

CAPPED RATES

Bristol & West	0800 119955	4.55%	01.4.01	90%	£295	Advances up to 85% – no (MIP)	to 31.3.04 4.5% of sum repaid
Hinckley Econ BS	01782 255150	4.95%	31.1.02	95%	£295	-	1st 5 yrs: 120 days interest
Scarborough BS	0990 133149	5.65%	4 years	95%	£295	-	1st 4 yrs: 5% of sum repaid

FIRST-TIME BUYERS (VARIABLE UNLESS SHOWN)

Coventry BS	0345 665522	3.55%R	31.5.01	95%	£295	Advs up to 90% – no MIP	to 31.5.04. 12-6 months int
Scarborough BS	0990 133149	4.20%	3 years	95%	-	£300 cash rebate	1st 5 years. 8.07% of sum repaid 3rd rebate rec'd
Derbyshire BS	01332 841000	5.40%R	5 years	95%	£125	£250 rebate, fee refunded & up to 90% – no MIP	Interest to end of month

VARIABLE DISCOUNTED RATES

Northern Rock	0845 6050500	3.30%	01.04.01	95%	-	Refund valn, 6 months free ASU & up to 90% – no MIP	1st 6yrs: 5-3% of sum repaid
West Bromwich BS	0121 5806404	4.45%R	3 years	85%	£295	£250 rebate, free MIP & free ASU for 1 year	1st 5 years: 5% of sum repaid
Halifax	0800 203049	4.95%	30.4.04	90%	-	No MIP & remtgs free valuation to 30.4.06. 3-1% of advance & legal fees	

UNSECURED PERSONAL LOANS

		APR	PRICE MONTHLY PAYMENT ON £5,000 FOR 3 YEARS			
Northern Rock	0345 421421	9.3% H	With Insurance	181.67	No insurance	£164.19
Phone A Loan (Yorkshire Bank)	0800 1386898	11.9%	With Insurance	183.40	No insurance	£164.61
Direct Line	0181 6809966	12.2% 0	With Insurance	182.34	No insurance	£165.22

OVERDRAFTS

		ACCOUNT	AUTHORISED %PM	APR	UNAUTHORISED %PM	APR
Alliance & Leicester	0500 959595	Alliance	0.95%	12.00%	2.20%	29.8%
Nationwide BS	0500 302010	Flexaccount	0.97%	12.20%	2.10%	28.3%
Abbey National	0800 7317774	Bank	1.05%	13.40%	2.20%	29.9%

CARDS

STANDARD

	TELEPHONE	CARD TYPE	RATE %PM	APR %	FEE PA	INTEREST FREE PERIOD	MIN OUTCOME
Co-operative Bank	0800 126000	Advantage Visa	0.48% N	5.90% N	Nil	0 days	
People's Bank Connecticut	0500 551055	Mastercard/ Visa	0.56% N	6.90% N	Nil	56 days	
RBS Advanta	0800 077770	Visa	0.565% N	6.90% N	Nil	56 days	

GOLD CARDS

Co-operative Bank	0800 404070	Base Rate Visa	0.4583%	10.04%	£120	46 days	£20K
Co-operative Bank	0800 126000	Adv Gold Visa	0.48% N	5.90% N	Nil	0 days	£20K
People's Bank Connecticut	0500 551055	Mastercard / Visa	0.58% N	6.90% N	Nil	56 days	£20K

STORE CARDS

		PAYMENT BY DIRECT DEBIT %PM	%APR	PAYMENT BY OTHER METHODS %PM	%APR
John Lewis	Via store	1.39%	18.0%	1.39%	18.0%
Marks & Spencer	01244 681681	1.93%	25.7%	1.99%	26.7%
BHS	Via store	1.95%	26.0%	2.15%	29.0%

ASU=Accident, sickness and unemployment insurance. B+C=Buildings and contents insurance. eom=end of month. D=Minimum age 22 years. H=If no insurance arranged APR 12.9%. N=Introductory rate for a limited period. R=Rate wef 1.3.99. U=Unemployment insurance. MIP=Mortgage indemnity premium. All rates subject to change without notice. Please check all rates before borrowing.
Figures compiled on: 22nd February 1999

Source: MoneyFacts

UNIT TRUSTS

BEST PERFORMING
OVER ONE YEAR
Lump, Cash Init £1,000.00, Off-Bid, Net Income

RANK	UNIT TRUST/OEIC	CASH
1	Fidelity American	1,805.55
2	Baring German Growth	1,566.32
3	AberdeenProf Technology	1,420.96
4	INVESCO GT European Growth	1,363.46
5	TU European	1,362.61
WORST PERFORMING		
1538	Govett Latin America	529.67
1539	Perpetual Latin American Gth	499.88
1540	Edinburgh Latin American Cl B	499.36
1541	Edinburgh Latin American Cl A	496.70
1542	Scot Widows Latin American	485.51
	Mean/Count	999.54/1542

BEST PERFORMING
OVER THREE YEARS

RANK	UNIT TRUST/OEIC	CASH
1	Fidelity American	2,620.65
2	TU European	2,389.80
3	INVESCO GT European Growth	2,276.61
4	Jupiter UK Growth Exempt	2,263.71
5	Baring German Growth	2,157.79
WORST PERFORMING		
1362	M&G Gold	387.89
1363	Lazard Pacific Growth	385.81
1364	Gartmore Gold & Int Resources	380.57
1365	S&P Gold & Exploration	258.48
1366	Old Mutual Thailand	227.14
	Mean/Count	1,273.99/1366

BEST PERFORMING
OVER FIVE YEARS

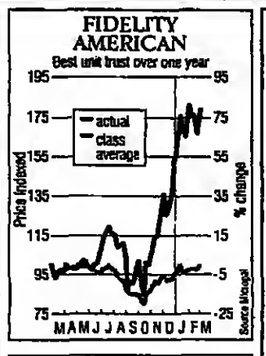
RANK	UNIT TRUST/OEIC	CASH
1	Fidelity American	3,513.14
2	GA North American Growth	3,410.48
3	AberdeenProf Technology	3,394.94
4	INVESCO GT European Growth	3,115.59
5	Edinburgh North American Cl B	3,046.54
WORST PERFORMING		
1135	Edinburgh Latin American Cl B	344.89
1136	Edinburgh Latin American Cl A	343.05
1137	S&P Gold & Exploration	339.01
1138	S&P Korea	316.51
1139	Old Mutual Thailand	274.00
	Mean/Count	1,452.32/1139

BEST PERFORMING
OVER TEN YEARS

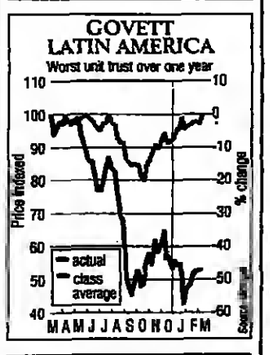
RANK	UNIT TRUST/OEIC	CASH
1	AberdeenProf Technology	10,199.67
2	GA North American Growth	8,844.28
3	Fidelity American	8,046.22
4	Britannia American Gth	7,266.70
5	Edinburgh North American Cl B	7,266.21
WORST PERFORMING		
759	Henderson Japan	535.17
760	HSBC Japan Index	517.73
761	INVESCO Japanese Gth	487.44
762	M&G Japan	434.78
763	Barclays Japan	353.93
	Mean/Count	2,848.07/763

Source: Standard & Poors/Micropal

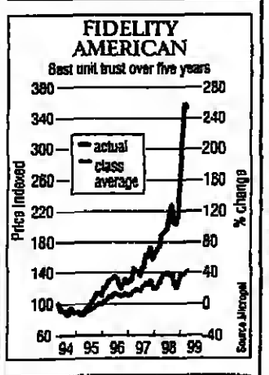
FIDELITY AMERICAN
Best unit trust over one year



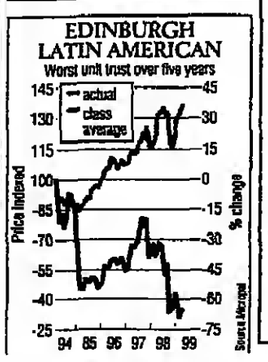
GOVETT LATIN AMERICA
Worst unit trust over one year



FIDELITY AMERICAN
Best unit trust over five years



EDINBURGH LATIN AMERICAN
Worst unit trust over five years



INVESTMENT TRUSTS

BEST PERFORMING
OVER ONE YEAR
Initial £1,000 lump sum, mid-price to mid-price

RANK	INVESTMENT TRUST	CASH
1	German Smlr Cos Wts	2,530.61
2	J. Fry Utilities Ord (2003)	1,795.78
3	Gartmore European Wts	1,751.48
4	Dartmoor Wts	1,661.54
5	J. Fry Euro Util Ord (2004)	1,614.93
WORST PERFORMING		
499	Tea Plantations Wts	164.18
500	Templeton Latin America Wts	162.16
501	First Russian Frontiers Wts	125.58
502	Central European Gth Wts	46.51
503	Fleming Japanese Wts	4.15
	Mean/Count	948.26/503

BEST PERFORMING
OVER THREE YEARS

RANK	INVESTMENT TRUST	CASH
1	Fleming Inc & Gth-Cap (2000)W	9,166.67
2	SR Pan-European Wts	5,300.00
3	Jove - Cap (2004)	5,161.73
4	Jupiter Extra Inc Wts	5,142.86
5	Dartmoor Wts	4,909.09
WORST PERFORMING		
420	Aberdeen New Dawn B Wts	67.80
421	Pacific Assets Wts	45.45
422	Central European Gth Wts	41.67
423	Aberdeen New Dawn C Wts	20.30
424	Fleming Japanese Wts	0.58
	Mean/Count	1,301.41/424

BEST PERFORMING
OVER FIVE YEARS

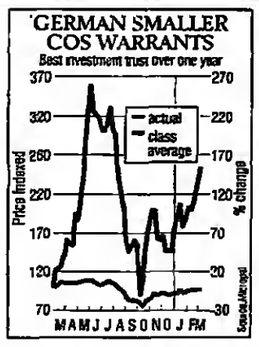
RANK	INVESTMENT TRUST	CASH
1	Framlington Dual-Cap (1999)	5,801.37
2	For & Col Enterprise	4,141.40
3	Jove - Cap (2004)	4,081.41
4	Jupiter Primadona Growth	3,184.19
5	Henderson Eurotrust-Ord (2002)	3,112.19
WORST PERFORMING		
303	Aberdeen New Dawn B Wts	57.97
304	Henderson Japanese Sml Co Wts	57.43
305	Edinburgh Java Wts	40.00
306	Perpetual Japanese Wts	38.46
307	Fleming Japanese Wts	0.45
	Mean/Count	1,378.07/307

BEST PERFORMING
OVER TEN YEARS

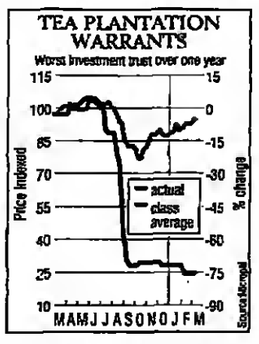
RANK	INVESTMENT TRUST	CASH
1	For & Col Enterprise	10,325.26
2	Framlington Dual-Cap (1999)	8,534.92
3	Candover	7,067.29
4	Jupiter Primadona Growth	6,036.72
5	Rights & Issues-Inc (2001)	5,739.51
	Mean/Count	3,088.96/119
WORST PERFORMING		
115	For & Col Emerging Markets	760.94
116	Baillie Gifford Shin Nippon	659.79
117	Trust of Property Shares	612.49
118	Korea-Europe Fund	363.20
119	INVESCO Enterprise	314.28
	Mean/Count	3,088.96/119

Source: Standard & Poors/Micropal

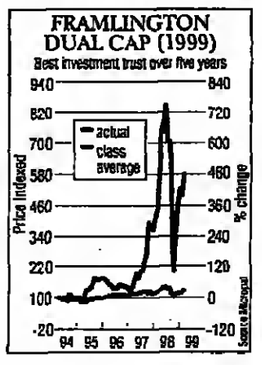
GERMAN SMALLER COS WARRANTS
Best investment trust over one year



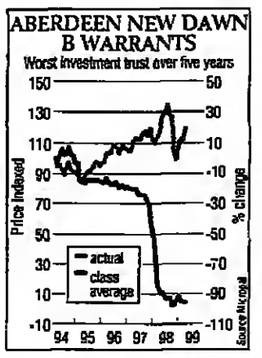
TEA PLANTATION WARRANTS
Worst investment trust over one year



FRAMLINGTON DUAL CAP (1999)
Best investment trust over five years



ABERDEEN NEW DAWN B WARRANTS
Worst investment trust over five years



EUROPEAN FUNDS

BEST PERFORMING UNIT TRUSTS
Initial £1,000 lump sum, offer to bid basis

RANK	EUROPEAN UNIT TRUSTS/OEICS	ONE YEAR CASH	EUROPEAN UNIT TRUSTS/OEICS	THREE YEARS CASH	RANK
1	Baring German Growth	1,566.32	TU European	2,389.80	1
2	INVESCO GT European Growth	1,363.46	INVESCO GT European Growth	2,276.81	2
3	TU European	1,362.61	Baring German Growth	2,157.79	3
4	INVESCO GT European Sml Cos	1,315.43	Newton European	2,054.05	4
5	Govett European Strategy	1,258.08	Gartmore European Select Dps	1,937.52	5

WORST PERFORMING UNIT TRUSTS

RANK	EUROPEAN UNIT TRUSTS/OEICS	ONE YEAR CASH	EUROPEAN UNIT TRUSTS/OEICS	THREE YEARS CASH	RANK
126	Dresdner RCM European Priv	938.83	INVESCO GT European Eqty & Bd	1,301.89	112
127	Baillie Gifford Euro Sm Cos	937.47	Schroder European Smaller Cos	1,265.12	113
128	Schroder European Smaller Cos	935.86	Schroder Inst European Sml Cos	1,251.86	114
129	Baring Europe Select	935.48	Framlington Contl Smlr Cos	1,154.51	115
130	Old Mutual European	914.27	Stewart Ivory Euro Smlr Cos	1,112.69	116
131	St James's Pl Recovery	881.99	Baillie Gifford Euro Sm Cos	1,081.53	117
	Mean/Count	1,099.13/131	Mean/Count	1,631.58/117	

EUROPEAN GENERAL INVESTMENT TRUSTS
Initial £1000 lump sum, mid-price to mid-price

RANK	EUROPEAN INVESTMENT TRUSTS	ONE YEAR CASH	EUROPEAN INVESTMENT TRUSTS	THREE YEARS CASH	RANK
1	Perpetual European	1,280.52	Henderson Eurotrust Units	2,159.72	1
2	Henderson Eurotrust Units	1,275.13	Perpetual European	2,033.03	2
3	Charter European Trust	1,185.33	Charter European Trust	1,995.55	3
4	Gartmore European	1,182.52	Gartmore European	1,945.10	4
5	For & Col Eurotrust	1,136.83	TR European Growth	1,846.17	5
6	Fleming European Fledgeling	1,135.23	For & Col Eurotrust	1,702.75	6
7	Martin Currie European	1,097.96	Mercury Euro Privatisation	1,695.02	7
8	TR European Growth	1,097.55	Martin Currie European	1,689.95	8
9	Fleming Continental European	1,085.05	Fleming Continental European	1,591.54	9
10	Mercury Euro Privatisation	1,062.49	Fidelity European Values	1,563.01	10
12	Mean/Count	1,132.99/12	Mean/Count	1,733.49	12

Source: Standard & Poors/Micropal

PERMANENT INTEREST-BEARING SHARES

PIBS	COUPON (gross, %)	MINIMUM (£)	PRICE (pence)	YIELD (gross, %)
Birmingham	9⅞	1,000	153	6.13
Bradford	11⅝	10,000	191	6.09
Bradford	13	10,000	214	6.07
Britannia	13	1,000	208	6.25
Coventry	12⅛	1,000	198	6.12
Leeds & Holbeck	13¾	1,000	209½	6.38
Newcastle	10½	1,000	179	6.01
Newcastle	12⅝	1,000	210	6.01
Skipton	12⅞	1,000	224	5.75

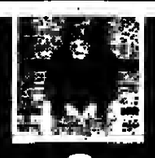
PERPETUAL SUBORDINATED BONDS	COUPON (gross, %)	MINIMUM (£)	PRICE (pence)	YIELD (gross, %)
Cheltenham and Gloucester	11¾	50,000	187½	6.27
First Active	11¾	10,000	160	7.34
Halifax	8¾	50,000	137¾	8.35
Halifax	12	50,000	176¾	6.79
Halifax	13⅞	50,000	222	8.14
Bristol and West	13⅞	1,000	200	6.69
Northern Rock	12⅝	1,000	201	6.28

Source: Greenwich NatWest

TEL: 0171 293 2222

BANKING, FINANCE, ACCOUNTANCY

FAX: 0171 293 2505



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Who's going to miss a tiny little million?

EVERY MORNING for the past week, I have woken up at 6am, convinced that what has roused me was not my alarm clock but the front door being kicked in.

I've even stopped ordering delivery pizzas; that way I know that if the door-bell rings it's either Jehovah's Witnesses or the fraud squad – and who wants to speak to any of them?

This is not mere paranoia, I'd like to point out. After all, I *did* spend hours and hours sitting next to the ghastly Neil on the way back from New York, the same ghastly Neil who was picked up for questioning at the airport by men in rumpled grey suits. If I'd listened to a word he'd said on the journey, instead of doing flower arrangements in my head, I might well be a useful witness.

By the time I stumbled blearily into the office, the news had already hit the City. Laura pounced on me before I'd even had a coffee.

"You'll never guess," she said triumphantly, and I couldn't bear to spoil her fun by saying I could, so I let her continue. "It's Neil. Horrible, horrible Neil has been arrested along with two of his colleagues. Apparently they had some scheme going that was going to cream two million out of the bank's coffers."

So, I thought, more victims of our get-rich-quick culture. It is an unwritten rule that at every dinner party you attend, at least one person has to tell you that they're planning to make a fortune and retire at 35.

Most of them are aiming to do it by devoting their every waking moment to some utterly depressing American financial institution. I bet they buy lottery tickets every week, though, just to be on the safe side.

Then the years go by and they're doing very nicely, thank you, but not *that* well – not retire-at-35 well – and they start to panic.

Another five years in the City will drive them insane, and they have to do something to escape. And that's when the temptation becomes unbearable. After all, they think, there's so much money washing around this place, who's going to miss a tiny little million?

THE TRADER

They're doing well but not retire-at-35 well and they start to panic. That's when the temptation kicks in

Then the phones began ringing. First there was Peter the Heavy Breather, who sounded as if he was hyperventilating with all the excitement.

"Did you hear?" he panted. "I can't believe it. Five million pounds. Apparently it was an insurance scam." Then he rushed off to give all his other contacts the news.

Next up was Belgian Philippe with the chocolate-smooth voice: "Well, I know you never trusted him," he purred.

"But even you must be surprised that he would try to defraud a pension company out of £10m."

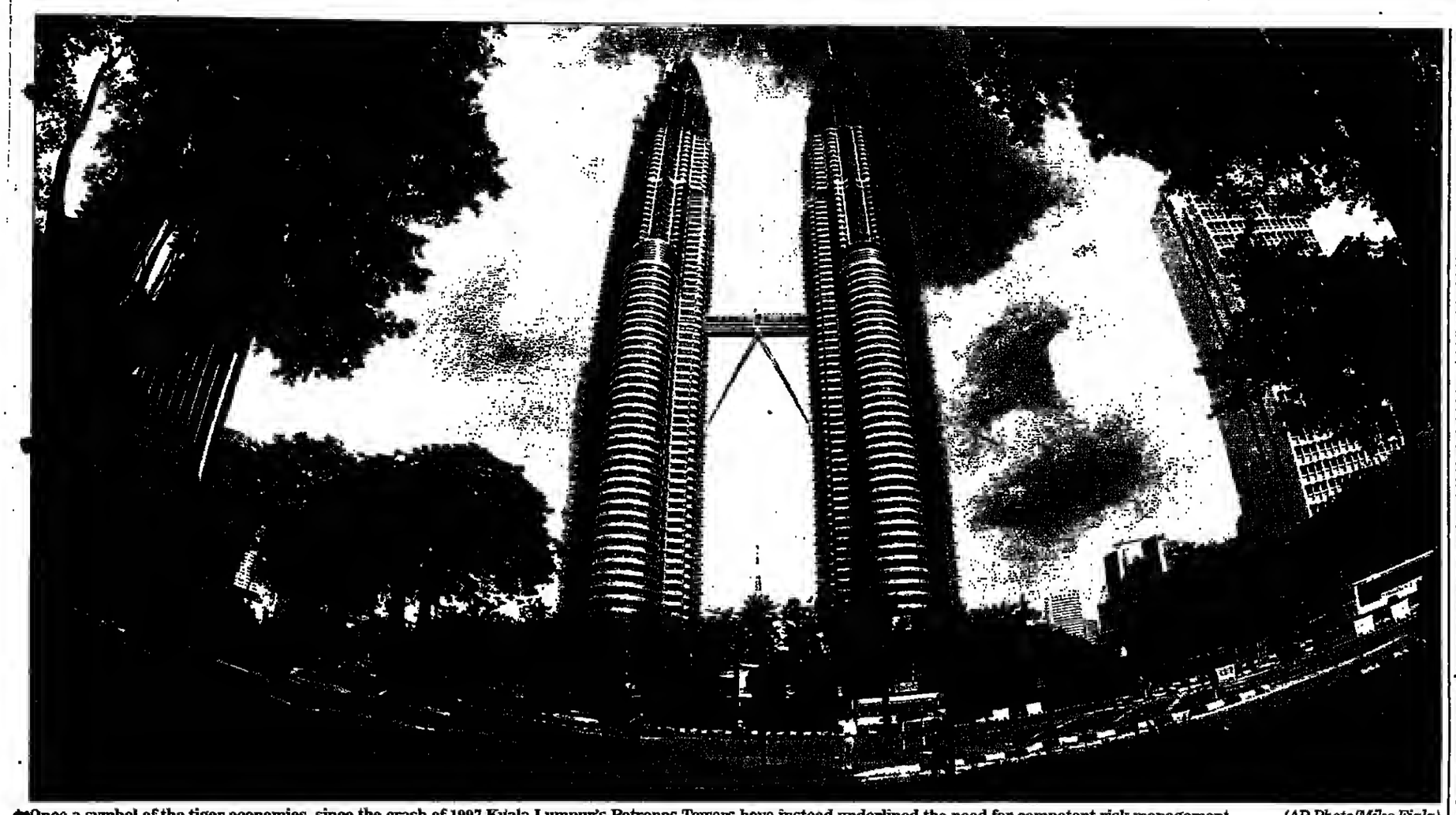
I'd hardly put the phone down before Jane rang, and I told her my part in the story, and she commiserated and told me that the word round her place was that it was £20m, and it involved some wheeze with futures.

"It'll be £100m and ripping off the Queen next," I muttered to Laura. "I wish we knew the *real* story."

But there was nothing in the papers the next day, or the next, or the next – nothing to banish my nightmares.

Then, at lunchtime today, Laura suddenly stabbed the *Standard* and squeaked, "It's here! Listen: 'Neil... blah blah... questioned over the past week... blah blah... The three men, who will be formally charged next week, were arrested after £100,000 went missing from their employer's coffers. The managing director said, 'This was a particularly pointless and amateurish attempt to defraud the company. Even a child could have spotted it' – only £100,000 after all!"

"Well, there's a relief," I said. "At least no one will want to make a film about it..."



Once a symbol of the tiger economies, since the crash of 1997 Kuala Lumpur's Petronas Towers have instead underlined the need for competent risk management *(AP Photo/Mike Fiala)*

Manage risk, protect rewards

BY ROGER TRAPP

AS A MOMENTARY blip is a tempting way to regard the fraud figures published last week by the accountancy firm KPMG. That serious fraud more than doubled over the year to £279m is serious enough, but it comes at a time of growing concern about business's ability to manage risk of all sorts.

Such worries have been most graphically illustrated by the financial crisis that brought the tiger economies of the Far East crashing to earth in 1997, before ripping through other emerging economies, and the near-collapse of the speculative investment fund Long-Term Credit Management. But the globalisation of business and the increasing complexity of many of its operations mean that it is a problem not limited to isolated incidents.

Recent research from another accountancy firm, Ernst & Young, indicates that senior executives are increasingly concerned about financial risk. Two-thirds of organisations across Europe said risk management was an important issue, with 97 per cent claiming to have assessed their major risks. But fewer than half expressed confidence in their risk control systems. Only 10 per cent were completely confident.

Even organisations that appear to be among the most sophisticated in the world find it easy to underestimate the risks in emerging markets or fledgling financial instruments.

For financial institutions a significant part of the problem is that their industry changes so fast. They need to make improvements to their risk-management systems just to keep pace. At the same time, they cannot abandon risk altogether, since a large part of their business is about assessing and taking risks.

But this is also true for non-financial businesses, since risk is a key element in the investment decisions made by shareholders and directors. Accordingly, while leading banks can be expected to limit their future exposure to emerging markets – just as they reduced their lending to the property sector after the sharp downturn at the beginning of this decade – they cannot abandon risk altogether.

Instead, organisations are tackling the issue in two ways. First, they are making greater use of models and detailed analysis of past events. Effective as these can be in reducing the likelihood of poor decisions, they will never provide an absolute answer, Michael Foot, head of financial supervision at the Financial Services Authority, points out.

But investors of all kinds are also trying to find out more about the operations in which they are seeking to invest: hence the growing interest in international accounting standards, so that investors can be more certain that companies are performing how they say they are.

But there is a related issue which has come to a head in the UK with the publication at the end of last year of the Stock Exchange's Combined Code on Corporate Governance, with its requirement that boards of companies identify key business risks or review how they have been identified and endorse the conclusions.

This has led to much debate about the extent to which managements will be prepared to report on their effectiveness and whether external auditors will feel qualified to comment upon such statements.

A survey recently carried out on behalf of the management consultancy Tillinghast-Towers Perrin found that most finance directors in leading companies, while recognising the importance of risk management, were worried about confidentiality and the costs of enhanced reporting on risk.

But the Institute of Internal Auditors is trying to drive home to organisations the need for effective controls. Though this idea has negative connotations, Richard Gossage, the NatWest executive who is the current president, sees a role for internal auditors in challenging their colleagues on their activities.

Mr Gossage believes he and his counterparts in other organisations can add value – in the current parlance – if they can encourage executives to take a more professional view of risk management. As evidence, he points to the arrival in certain financial institutions of operational risk management functions. And he hopes others will be encouraged to join them by a brochure his organisation has published under the title "10 minutes is all it takes" with the aim of setting out the benefits of having an effective internal audit department.

But organisations are not starting to go down this route just because they are being compelled to. They are starting to see sound commercial reasons for doing so, not least because companies with such systems in place are starting to be seen as better credit risks.

As Mr Gossage says: "Assessing and controlling risks is not a flash in the pan. It's a key driver for maintaining sound corporate governance and competitive advantage."

Nevertheless, for all his enthusiasm, there are still plenty of grounds for concern. At the FSA, for instance, Mr Foot points to barriers to effective internal controls, including the difficulty of managing increasingly far-flung and complex organisations. The collapse of Barings has shown how easy it is for responsibility for certain activities to slip between the cracks.

COMMENTARY

The shape of services to come

BY LAWRENCE GREEN

ANYBODY WHO has experience of a National Health Service hospital waiting room knows how much government services need to improve. Privatisation might have reduced the size of the public sector, but what is left falls short of the best in the private sector.

The Labour government's White Paper on Better Government, expected soon, will set out a grand vision for improvement. But, according to one of Britain's leading management consultants, it is not likely to provide much guidance on how this can be achieved.

Lynton Barker, head of UK Management Consultant Services at PricewaterhouseCoopers, is co-author of a book that has as its central premise the idea that New Labour's Third Way must be extended into "all parts of their delivery machine – the UK Civil Service and their private sector partners/suppliers".

Mr Barker, who co-wrote *Transforming Government Services* with an American colleague, acknowledges that organisations such as his will benefit in this approach, PwC already being among the biggest suppliers of consulting services to government bodies.

He sees "an enormous training and skills redevelopment programme for government managers and officers".

One of the key areas for change will be the civil servant's attitude to risk. People used to taking a safety first approach are likely to have trouble handling risks associated with delivering best value, he says. "Politicians are going to have to accept that they'll need executives to take more risks, to do things differently, and they'll have to stand by them if it doesn't work."

The practicalities of this new way of doing things are also not lost on the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (Cipfa). In a consultation paper last week, they set out a possible accounting framework for underpinning best value in local authorities.

Certain issues must be addressed, says Cipfa, including appropriate definitions of the cost of services, what detail should be recorded to aid comparisons between authorities, the relevance of trading accounts, and how the accounting framework should recognise partnerships between authorities and private sector.

As Mr Barker points out, Mr Blair's Third Way draws oo both sides of the political divide and reflects what is happening in public services in other parts of the world. Thus, it has a great deal going for it.

THE INDEPENDENT
Wednesday 3 March 1999

ME AND MY PARTNER

HOWARD LEIGH AND HUGO HADDON-GRANT

After a bad day at work, Howard Leigh phoned fellow accountant Hugo Haddon-Grant and suggested they launch their own business. A decade later, Cavendish Corporate Finance employs 16 people and has sold 100 companies

Howard Leigh and Hugo Haddon-Grant, keeping in step on the way up *Nicola Kurtz*

HOWARD LEIGH: I was at Deloitte Haskins & Sells and had helped to start the M&A (mergers and acquisitions) Group, but I was unhappy that we were advising vendors, and purchasers were our audit clients. I felt there was an irreconcilable conflict of interests.

One day Hugo and I had lunch; he was on the other side of a deal. My impression was that he was competitive and fairly tough, but easy-going. He suggested that we set up our own business, providing a service for vendors only. I enjoyed lunch tremendously and after the appropriate number of bottles of wine, I thought, "That's a good idea".

Six months later, I had had a very bad day and disagreed fundamentally with the strategy Deloitte's were taking, so I phoned Hugo and said: "Remember that conversation? Do you want to pick it up again?" He said: "It's funny you should ring – I have just handed in my notice. Let's meet." We met on the Wednesday. On the Monday, I handed in my notice.

This was the heady days of the late 1980s; we were Thatcher's children and you felt you could walk on water. I remember being quite forthright with Hugo and thought to myself, "There's no downside here". I realised that a large organisation – although there were some excellent, bright, talented people there – was not what I would be comfortable with. I also realised I was earning my employers vast sums by bringing in the work from my own contacts.

Somebody gave us two rooms in Cavendish Square: we were amazed the name Cavendish was not already taken. The acid test came when I went to say goodbye to one of the partners at Deloitte's and be asked where I was going. I said I was joining Cavendish Corporate Finance, and he said: "Very fine firm." Coming to the West End was fantastic and has made my life so much more enjoyable – our clients much prefer it, and when we started there was an enormous buzz.

The thing about acting only for vendor clients is that every single piece of work is fresh. We knew we had to go out marketing. In fact, the first real bit of work we had – for a business called Coopers Walking Sticks – came knocking on the door. It was a 120-year-old business owned by a couple who wanted to retire. We have never spent so much time on one deal than on that one. But the owners came to my wedding last year. That's the nice thing about what we do – you form very strong relationships.

I took on the responsibility of bringing in work, contacting people and talking to them. Hugo took over the financial obligations. He is very competent at making sure transactions pay. The two tricks of our trade are, first, to identify the buyer, then to get the deal through. Hugo is very good at getting that done, although it's a fraught experience for most people. It's nerve-racking – they have never been through it before but a purchaser has, and is skilled at hitting the price at the last minute. The vendor doesn't know what to expect, what they can give and what they can't; what is a fair price and what is ridiculous.

A little bit of our job is keeping the vendor on the straight and narrow, but most of it is making sure the purchaser delivers, and if he doesn't, that others will. It's about judging how hard to push a purchaser and judging whether to go out and seduce another purchaser. In the sale process, the first thing is to understand the business; it'a key. Then you have to assess where the purchasers are likely to be. The most important thing is the order in which you contact purchasers: there's no point talking to your competitor till you have talked to the people far away from the business, who take time to think strategically about whether they want to invest. Within three months of setting up, we knew things were okay so we recruited a researcher. We also spent a lot on resources and databases, ones that would help us to find buyers.

We had said that for the first year, we would work without salary. We lived off fees, which meant it had to work. For the first five years, we sat in the same room and that was brilliant because you overheard each other's conversation, every single word. I enjoy living, breathing and thinking about the business all day, all night and all weekend. It's part of me. Hugo likes to switch off. He'll spend a Saturday fishing.

If I had started up on my own, I would have been bust within a week. I would have invested in all sorts of things I didn't need. Hugo is more measured and, curiously enough, slightly harder on fees. I tend to be harder and more aggressive for clients than to clients. He will stop me agreeing a fee and say, "Hang on, it should be more than that", and I'll see he's right. We talk about where we are in deals all the time. The first year, we spent every Sunday on the phone.

Things were difficult in 1992, but we came out of the recession because we hadn't built up overheads. Hugo is clever. We had a two-year break clause for our rent, which Hugo persuaded our landlord to accept in 1990, so it went down dramatically, which had a huge impact.

In the first years, we operated slightly differently: now, we almost certainly have the same response to a problem. We often meet clients together and work out who would be best to deal with it. Hugo has got the measure of who I am. I think he finds me challenging because I am the person who, if given six, will want 12. I push things. I would not want someone like me as a partner, but he knows I need him, and he needs me.

HUGO HADDON-GRANT: I felt Howard was somebody I could do business with. I got on well with him and we came across each other on one or two deals. When we had lunch together, we discussed the idea of setting up in business. I was working for a small corporate finance house: I had qualified as a chartered accountant with Grant Thornton and spent time focusing on mergers and acquisitions, which is now much more of a discipline than it was then. As the 1980s progressed, the idea of people selling their businesses became more acceptable and common. Entrepreneurs realised that they had built up a value and these companies were saleable in their own right: I think that was the result of the unlisted securities market. It meant medium-sized private companies could float, and raised awareness.

I enjoyed mergers and acquisitions, but felt I could make more money doing it for myself rather than for somebody else. I had never felt I was a good employee – I always wanted to do my own thing. After I handed in my notice I had one or two irons in the fire and could afford not to work for a few months. Howard hadn't pursued our idea because of family issues, which prevented him thinking about it, but then he phoned and said: "Are you still up for it?"

We were more successful in the early years than we had expected and we had our fair share of luck. I was looking after support and administration involved in setting up a business, and Howard, being more of an extrovert, was on the marketing side. He comes across as being able to provide the support that the client needs, and understands what those needs are. I was quite happy not to front the business as much as Howard. As our relationship has developed, our overall roles of managing and marketing the business have remained. Howard would be the first to admit he would not be terribly good at the sort of admin that is a necessity.

Selling a business, for most private company owners, is probably the biggest single economic decision they are going to make in their lives. When someone sells, that's his future security. The sale is also an emotional decision.

Our role is obviously to get the best deal for him financially, but it's not always the driving or determining factor. Some people are very keen that their staff are looked after or that the buyer isn't going to sack everybody and relocate to London. Quite often, you are the only person who knows what's happening, because the client can't talk to employees. You really have to be able to manage that emotional side.

You have to have tenacity to get the deal through, to ensure that people carry on talking: there are times when both parties will walk away, and your job is to identify the common ground.

I'm probably harder than Howard in negotiating fees for Cavendish, but there's not a lot of point in doing the work unless you get properly rewarded. I'm also probably harder at looking at deals that I don't think we can complete, and where you would have an unhappy client. We have certainly developed an instinct for that, and we are becoming more selective.

Where a business is wholly focused on two or three people, perhaps the owners, it's very difficult if it is below a certain size, because when those people have received several million pounds, it's difficult to persuade a buyer they will still have the same motivation.

Now we have to delegate quite a lot, particularly when it comes to operational issues. That's a different skill, and something we are going through. There's no set plan where we've said: "In five years, we are going to sell the business." We would like to continue to grow it because there's still a very substantial market.

I value Howard's ability to see business opportunities. He has a considerable talent and he's much more adept at working a room than I am. Perhaps he's learnt from me not to rush at things too hard and fast before thinking them over a bit. He is probably frustrated at times that I am somewhat too cautious, but I think we complement each other. If we disagree, it works its way through the system. I think you need a bit of friction to generate ideas and keep things moving.

INTERVIEWS BY RACHELLE THACKRAY

THE INDEPENDENT

3 March 1999

WEDNESDAY REVIEW

So, Germaine, since animals now have rights, how about men?

YOU ASK THE QUESTIONS

Carolyn Djanogly

Germaine Greer's new book, *The Whole Woman*, which claims women have settled for a fake equality instead of true liberation, is published next week by Doubleday. Nearly 30 years after she wrote *The Female Eunuch*, she has been driven to write another feminist polemic by the complacency of a younger generation of women. We asked readers to submit their questions for Dr Greer.

Who is your feminist icon?
I am not too keen on the trade in icons, which I think exploits the ignorant and gullible among us. An icon is a sacred image that is replicated thousands upon thousands of times, until there is a copy of it exposed and venerated in every room of every home and in every public place. If you attend a religious service in Russia, for example, you may see women of my age kneeling and prostrating themselves before icons, kissing them and squandering their hard-earned copecks on tapers to light before them. Perish the thought that feminism should be infested with icons. No human being, not even the most valiant feminist, deserves to be elevated to divine status so that others abuse themselves before her. Journobabble about "High Priestesses of feminism" and such is designed to reduce the feminist movement to the status of superstitious cult, but it will have to accomplish this aim without my assistance.

If what this question really means is: "Who are the living feminists you most respect?" it can be answered thus (in no particular order): Ti-Grace Atkinson, Florynce Kennedy, Anne Oakley, Shulamith Firestone, Andrea Dworkin, Helena Kennedy, Juliet Mitchell, Selma James, the Guerilla Girls, Dacia Maraini, Helene Cixous, Orlan, Adrienne Rich, Bea Campbell, Margaret Atwood, Jo Freeman, bell hooks, Nancy Chodorow, Audre Lorde, Charlotte Bunch, Phyllis Chesler, Josepha Grieve, Janice Raymond, Alison Jaggar, Terry Lovell, Mary Daly, Madonna, Janice Raymond, Iris Marion Young, Nina Simone, Marguerite Duras, Marilyn French, Monique Wittig, Gisele Halimi, Mehry Manoutcherian, Luce Irigaray, Natalya Malakhovskaya, Tatyana Mamonova, Sheila Rowbotham, Ellen Frankfort.

How do you define feminism?
I don't. *Definitio est negatio*. To define is to limit. Feminism is a habit of thought that is still taking shape within a razor-wire tangle of paradox: I do not know which way it will go. It may be that women will eventually opt for the cyborg option and vote, like the House of Lords, for their own abolition. This I would not do, because I am a child of the Fifties and the born body warts and all is a central value in my moral system. I would fight for reality over virtuality any time, but I am old. Although I am possibly condemned to remain on Earth for the next 40 years or so, my self will be considered irrelevant, and my views quaint, old-fashioned and retrograde, at least until the cyborgs are wiped out by internecine cyberterrorism and we find ourselves back where we started. Then the plot that was thought to have been lost will be found, safe and sound.

If I must define feminism, I must do so without issuing a set of commandments. Historically, radical movements have dissipated too much of their limited resources of energy in rooting out heterodoxy, so the last thing I would want to do is suggest a framework for doing just that. A feminist is one who considers herself first and foremost a woman and identifies primarily with other women. Before she is of *any race or nationality or creed*, any age set or social class or political party or sexual orientation or profession, she is a woman, and her loyalty is to women.

If you had to name one person who has set back the feminist movement most in the last 30 years, who would it be?
To answer this I would have to admit that feminism has been set back in the last 30 years which, in view of the fact that the last 30 years have seen a veritable explosion of feminist activity, would be quixotic. There has never been any shortage of opponents of feminism and the most insidious among them are those who mouth pro-feminist sentiments at the same time as they divide woman against woman and demand more and more from women who are already running full tilt in order to stay on the spot. The most immediate and effective enemy British feminism has is the Labour Government, which points to the number of women Labour MPs as a way of proving its claim to political correctness beyond doubt, so that it can pursue anti-woman policies and beat up on single mothers and teachers and nurses with impunity.

What is your reaction to "post-feminism"?
Post-feminism does not actually exist because we are still in the phase of pre-feminism. The coinage is a misuse, much as "post-colonial" used to describe a system that is still colonial in root and branch. In these "post" times, imperialist exploitation, in the guise of lending hard currencies to nations without them, and exacting compound interest, is bleeding the colonised nations white. Just so, capitalism is using women, as a completely biddable, entirely expendable workforce, to build the very systems that oppress them. Women, like other colonised peoples, still have a long climb ahead of them to freedom and self-determination.

Do you regret your critical article about the motivation of Mother Teresa, in *The Independent* some years ago?
In the Heroes and Villains series in *The Independent*'s Magazine for 22 September 1990 I nominated Mother Teresa as my villain. *It was not her motivation* that I questioned. That was always crystal clear. She cared for the poor of Calcutta not for love of them or out of commitment to any ideal of social justice, but for love of Christ. Others more distinguished and better informed have since written about Mother Teresa in greater detail.

My only regret is that in 1990 I did not have the information on Mother Teresa's activities, her political allegiances, her financial dealings, the sub-standard care delivered by her nuns, and her obstruction of other charitable initiatives, that has since come to light. Mother Teresa is a modern, media-fed icon, in whose image (as distinct from her reality) the gullible and guilty faithful have invested all their own longing for virtue. It will be interesting to see which way the Vatican will jump in the matter of her beatification, because all the relevant information has been laid before the Holy See. My own feeling is that the Catholic authorities will assess whether canonising Mother Teresa will give the Church more grief than not canonising her would, and act accordingly.

Your comments on programmes such as *Late Review* are usually ungenerous and often unpleasantly *ad hominem* (or *ad feminam*). I shed no tears over the unappealing Suzanne Moore, her cleavage or her welcoming shoes. That at least was funny. But "Tom Hanks has a face like a King Edward potato" and "What is the point of Mary Steenburgen?" are neither amusing nor interesting. So in a similar vein, can I ask you: What is the point of Germaine Greer?
Movie stars who are cast as romantic leads are supposed to be attractive; if they are unattractive the point is material and the criticism is justified. As Mark Lawson is invariably on the point of interrupting me I have to make my points succinctly, so they come out brutal. What I really wanted to say was that with a mouth like that, Tom Hanks is bound to be a slimy kisser. Just look at the fumbled (un)climactic kiss at the end of *You've Got Mail*. A million dollars couldn't get Meg Ryan to put her head in a position where those wet, wobbly lips might come down on hers.
Suzanne Moore may be unattractive to you, but she is not a movie star and criticism of her appearance was not justified in the same way. My intention was to say of her things that are easily verifiable and not actionable, and do not invade her privacy, to pay her back for saying of me things that were untrue and were actionable and represented a gross intrusion of privacy. The newspaper paid the damages, but I did not intend to let Moore get away scot free. The chastisement has done her nothing but good. As for the point of "Germaine Greer", damned if I know.

Since animals are nowadays understood to have rights, how about men? You know, to education, employment, treatment under the NHS.
I agree that men are animals and as such are entitled to humane treatment and should not be trapped or shot or bred for food or fur. Their access to education depends upon their capacity to profit by it. Nobody, male or female, has any right to employment. As for medical treatment, as men control the medical profession, if men had wanted to spend their lives under the doctor as women do, they would have made sure that they did. As it is, they make sure that they do not, by refusing pointless procedures such as mass screening for prostate cancer. If you want your life medicalising, I'm sure it can be arranged, but life under the doctor is a good deal less pleasant than you appear to imagine.

Questions sent by: Andrew Schofield, Cambridge; Douglas Blane; David Blair, Watford; Claire Follain, Jersey

NEXT WEEK

TONY BANKS, FOLLOWED BY EILEEN DREWERY

SEND ANY questions for Tony Banks, minister for sport, and for Eileen Drewery, Glenn Hoddle's mystic adviser, to: You Ask the Questions, Features, *The Independent*, 1 Canada Square, London E14 5DL (fax 0171-293 2182 or e-mail yourquestions@independent.co.uk), by 12 noon on Friday 5 March

INSIDE

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Post letters to Letters to the Editor, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, London E14 5DL and include a daytime telephone number, fax to 0171 293 2056 or e-mail to letters@independent.co.uk. E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity

Canals of Birmingham No 3: A cyclist on the towpath alongside the Farmer's Bridge locks on the Birmingham & Fazeley Canal *Andy Fox*

Pusztai's results

Sir: Media coverage of GM foods and the Pusztai affair has been characterised by inaccurate reports that have usually reflected a strong bias for or against GM foods. We would like to try to clarify some of the key issues.

Shortly after Dr Arpad Pusztai's interview on *World in Action* it was suggested that his experiments had only tested the effects of potato spiked with ConA lectin. He was then suspended from his post at the Rowett Institute and an audit was instituted according to Medical Research Council guidelines, an act that could be interpreted as implying fraud.

It is clear from the report of this audit, conducted in August 1998 but only recently and incompletely released (http://www.rri.sari.ac.uk/press), that experiments involving transgenic potatoes containing the gene for the snowdrop lectin (GNA) had already been performed at the time of Dr Pusztai's television interview. Although Dr Pusztai's suspension was subsequently lifted, he was prevented from continuing his experiments on the transgenic potatoes.

It was this aggressive treatment that led ourselves and other scientists to allow our names to be included in a memorandum defending Dr Pusztai, whom we know to be an honourable and careful scientist. If the Rowett Institute had simply released a statement that the data was preliminary and allowed the work to continue, much of the confusion would have been prevented.

It has been widely stated that all lectins are toxic. They are not. They are ubiquitous carbohydrate-binding proteins. All mammalian cells and all plant nuts, seeds and bulbs, including many foodstuffs, contain lectins. Some of these, red kidney beans for example, are toxic and need to be destroyed by heat before consumption but others such as tomato lectin are apparently harmless when eaten raw.

Many of these plant lectins serve an insecticidal or antifungal role in the plant. The snowdrop lectin (GNA) binds to a sugar called mannose which is virtually absent from the lining of the mammalian intestine but is extensively expressed in the intestine of sap-sucking insects. It is therefore plausible that expression of this lectin in food plants might render them unattractive to insects but safe for human consumption, particularly if the food (potato) is always cooked.

The experiments performed by Dr Pusztai, whatever their results, would not imply that all genetically modified foods were unsafe. The message Dr Pusztai was trying to put across was simply that such foods require particularly careful testing before release. Some will prove toxic or otherwise unsatisfactory and be discarded.

The fact that Dr Pusztai has been barred from continuing his experiments has resulted in an unsatisfactory situation in which his data, although interesting, remain preliminary and further experimentation will be needed before final conclusions can be drawn.

Professor JONATHAN RHODES
Dr RONALD FINN
Department of Medicine
University of Liverpool

Baffled by the euro

Sir: We pay 659 MPs about £30m annually in salaries to make decisions on our behalf. Why, therefore, is it necessary to have a referendum on the one topic that the man on the Clapham omnibus probably knows next to nothing about – the economic pros and cons of joining the single currency?

In the only other referendum that this country has had, people voted "no" to Europe for a variety of nonsensical reasons such as that they thought they would be forbidden to buy traditional fish and chips, that they would not be allowed to take afternoon tea, or that they would be forced to become Roman Catholics. It would seem that similar nonsensical notions, rather than the good of the country, would colour the way in which people voted in the EMU referendum.

If not that, then they would vote in the way that Australo-American and Canadian newspaper proprietors, who appear to have a vested interest in keeping Britain at odds with Europe, told them to vote.

Some people would vote "no" because they consider that joining EMU would result in a loss of "sovereignty", but how can a country whose foreign policy and some of its domestic policy – on drugs, for example – is dictated by America call itself sovereign?

Perhaps we should scrap the idea of a referendum and let the politicians decide, on the best advice from industry and economists, whether or not to join the single currency. Why have a dog and do the barking yourself?

C CROFTON-SLEIGH
Surrey, Kent

Sir: Although heartily agreeing with you about the necessity of joining economic and monetary union, I cannot agree with your leading article (1 March) that a referendum now would give a positive result.

Last summer this branch of the European Movement held 13 information stalls in various towns, handing out brochures and look-alike euro currency notes, as well as answering questions about the euro.

Although many younger people and students were for our joining EMU, the lack of knowledge – or even wanting to know – among older people was horrifying. Pensioners who were in the last war seemed to think it was a German ploy to take over the UK! A poll last September showed that whereas 54 per cent of citizens in mainland Europe were well informed about the euro, only 8 per cent of Britons were.

To produce a "yes" vote in a referendum will need the Government to send information throughout the kingdom, particularly in England. We shall be out and about again this year campaigning for a positive referendum result, despite Hugh Dykes's derogatory remarks (letter, 20 February) about the European Movement.

PAMELA WARD
Vice-President
Huddersfield Branch
European Movement
Slaithwaite, West Yorkshire

Sir: I too have made inquiry on cheque payments in euros for my own business (letter, 25 February).

European countries have different standard physical sizes for cheques. So cheques in euros, even from one Euroland country to another, still suffer the "negotiation fee" cost. It seems this amounts to a handling charge because machinery will only cope with the local cheque sizes. Can this be holding back a European clearing system?

Banks of course are reluctant to upgrade machinery as they want to eliminate cheques, but fail to make electronic transfer of small sums cost-effective. "Negotiating" a cheque can cost £12 to £15 per cheque. I use an organisation – not a bank – that manages to do it for £3.

SHARON BOWLES
Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire

Grandparent crisis

Sir: Recently the daughters of three of my closest friends have each had a first child.

Two were born to teenage mothers with partners (occasionally) who are obsessively jealous and violent. The other was born to a mother in her thirties and what can only be described as a serial father, for this is his sixth child by a number of different women, some of whom he married.

Thirty years ago we campaigned for family planning for all. We thought, in our naivety, that if every child became a wanted child you could in one stroke eliminate child abuse and neglect, illiteracy, poverty, homelessness.... It hasn't exactly worked out like that.

I have no reason to believe that my friends' grandchildren are anything other than wanted. I also know that these particular babies will be protected, cared for and loved by an extended family, especially their grandparents.

But it is chilling to think that the backup a stable grand-parents' home can provide is a resource which is running out. When these babies have their own children where are their grandparents?

How do I congratulate my friends? Every child is a gift, a cause for rejoicing. Yet for too many children the strands in the cradle that is their birthright are snapping.

YVONNE CRAIG
Bedford

Hype grand prix

Sir: Kelvin MacKenzie is in danger of believing his own hype when he claims to have "broadcasting rights" to the Australian Grand Prix ("You're Through to Talk Radio", 25 February). Radio 5 Live has exclusive commentary rights to all Formula One Grands Prix – including the Australian. Talk Radio has news access only. Mr MacKenzie's happy little band of listeners should not be misled.

The idea that we are throwing public money into sports rights to get the audiences is simply wrong. With the help sometimes of European public-service broadcasters, we have brought sports coverage at a modest cost to UK licence-payers. And it is not just sport that drives audiences: 5 Live's most popular programme is the weekday *Breakfast Show*.

MIKE LEWIS
Controller Radio Sports Rights
BBC Radio 5 Live
London W12

Banning bias

Sir: In the aftermath of the Lawrence enquiry, we should look at how progressive companies are, rather than how guilty.

I worked in South Africa running cultural change, communication and industrial relations programmes for major employers. On my return, in 1985, I was surprised at how little equal opportunities had advanced, and the lack of specific targets for senior management positions, training and monitoring.

I recently ranked 18 major retail, financial and leisure companies on the priority they gave to their employees, the wider community and the environment. Some 72 per cent had equal opportunity policies, but only two, the Royal Bank of Scotland and Nat West, specified the present imbalance. The Royal Bank of Scotland says 17 per cent of middle and 9 per cent of senior managers are women, whilst Nat West states that 20 per cent of its managers are women, and 2.5 per cent from the ethnic minorities.

Only four companies had women executive directors, and none had an ethnic minority director. This does not make business sense, as the majority of their customers and employees are women, and many products are targeted at women and the ethnic minorities. Changing company culture, like changing the wider society, takes time and commitment, and leadership from the top. It needs role models in senior positions, and it makes business sense.

JANET SALMON
Richmond, Surrey

Don't ring your GP

Sir: It would be far more reasonable to offer the NHS Direct service of telephone advice by nurses as optional rather than totally denying access to one's GP (report, 27 February). When the NHS's litigation costs are at an all-time high, it would be interesting to see the impact of NHS Direct on negligence claims.

Given the known pitfalls of giving advice or diagnosing without access to the patient's records, should not the Government try to reassure the public before imposing restrictions on patients' fundamental rights?

Dr JAYANTHA ILANGARATNE
Beverley, North Humberside

Sir: The suggestion that patients would no longer have direct access to their GP is quite frightening.

Access to a caring GP at the end of the telephone, who knew the patient well, made it possible for me to care for my increasingly frail and disabled husband at home to within two days of his death.

How many mothers with an obviously sick child would be able to call up sufficiently precise medical vocabulary to persuade a previously unknown nurse of the need for a home visit? If a mistake is made, the doctor is not called and the child is damaged, who will be legally responsible? If this is the kind of service to be provided, more people will struggle to take out private insurance.

LILY G W TURNER
St Albans, Hertfordshire

Sir: Those with impaired hearing are increasingly excluded from the machinery of a society rushing into telephone contact for everything. This will become intolerable if matters of health have to be communicated to a stranger who knows nothing of one's medical history, perhaps speaking in dialect and located hundreds of miles away in some gigantic Babel.

Strange voices are difficult for the hearing-impaired to handle and a common feature of centralised call-handling is people with poor elocution and often unfamiliar accents who think the mark of competence is how rapidly they can spew out a torrent of words. Mention that you are deaf and they shout at you or lose patience.

As hospitals are already desperately short of nurses, where are the qualified staff to be found to extend NHS Direct? It is easy to see how staff shortage could lead to menu-switching: "If you have been sick press 1. If you have pain in your right buttock press 2." The mind boggles.

GRAHAM HOLDEN
Budleigh Salterton, Devon

Sir: Patients with long-term illness need to have direct access to their doctors, simply so they can "help themselves". Many millions of people who live with illness for life, and for whom there is no cure, cope best when they know they can get access to quick advice from their doctor, when they know they need it.

The proposals to channel all requests through nurses make an assumption that living with serious, long-term illness needs the same approach as coughs and colds.

Introducing such ideas without consultation with patient organisations does not seem to be in keeping with the emerging patient partnership strategy. We support NHS Direct but this is an unplanned and could well be an inappropriate development.

JUDY WILSON
Director
The Long-term Medical Conditions Alliance
London EC1

Dame Iris's XI

Sir: Miles Kington ("Golden Cricketing Moments with Dame Iris Murdoch", 25 February) reports Murdoch's comparison of field-placing to planning a novel. I find that on the first page of her *Book of the Brotherhood* she introduces the reader to exactly 11 named characters. QED?

RICHARD FIDDIAN
Herpenden, Hertfordshire

IN BRIEF

Sir: As the statistics are readily available it is surprising that the issue of teacher unemployment (report, 1 March) has not been highlighted before, so credit to *The Independent*. But, if the well-qualified can't find jobs, the Government's mantra "Welfare to Work" seems increasingly empty. As ever, it gives no answer to the question, where are the jobs?

STEPHEN MAGILL
Huddersfield, West Yorkshire

Sir: The Bishop of Chelmsford (letter, 27 February) writes of sex as "a beautiful but fragile gift from God", and then rants on about the "most graphic sex scenes shown on TV", referring to *Queer as Folk*. What rubbish! Similar scenes of heterosexual sex are shown almost nightly. Would he be describing a show with so-called straight sex as "pleasure turned nasty"? I doubt it. The real "nasty pleasure" is that shown by the God-squad in their increasing obsession with judging the sex lives of others.

GARY WILLIAMS
Poole, Dorset

Sir: Oh dear, there still exists strong evidence of C P Snow's "two cultures". Weight and mass can never become the same, virtually the same or anything like the same (letter, 1 March). Whilst the state of weightlessness is now regularly seen in images from orbiting spacecraft, those astronauts are not massless – they still contain all the molecules they left Earth with. Mass is a measure of how much stuff there is, whereas weight is a force, which only exists when there is at least one other mass around to create this attractive force.

Dr ANTHONY EGAN
Surbiton, Surrey

Sir: We were delighted to read that we had won the "competition" for the new home for the Greater London Authority (leading article, 26 February). Regrettably, whilst the process of selection was complex and opaque to the point of farce it did not extend to appointing an architect who had not submitted a design.

MARCO GOLDSCHMIED
Managing Director
Richard Rogers Partnership
London W6

The volatile and vivacious world of the adjective

MILES KINGTON

'Formulaic' is a word much used by lazy TV executives – as if there were any other kind

"I ALWAYS feel sorry for the word 'pyrrhic'. 'Pyrrhic' is a really neat little adjective, but it's never going to get very far up the ratings. Do you know why? Because it only has one usage. Only a victory can be 'pyrrhic'. Nothing else can. You can't have a pyrrhic election or a pyrrhic dinner party. There's no other way you can use the word 'pyrrhic', other than with 'victory', so it doesn't crop up that often. No wonder it doesn't even make the top 1,000 in the world..."

Hold on, hold on! Who is our arcane informant and what on earth is he on about? Ratings for adjectives? Top 1,000 adjective lists? Is someone mad?

No, far from it. Tennis players and golfers are not the only ones who have their own world rankings. It's beginning to happen to discrete parts of speech as well. And Oscar Beussberger, who is head of ATP (Adjective Trend Plotting), is in charge of keeping an eye on the mercurial changes in adjective popularity. At the ATP headquarters, which are situate in a prestigious suburb of Oxford, they are busy night and day computing the comparative standing of various adjectives, as part of the ongoing process of measuring the speed at which language changes.

It's challenging and gruelling work, logging all use of adjectives, but it's also giving the ATP people a unique insight into the organic way a language evolves.

"Let's take a look at what you've written already," says Oscar Beussberger, peering sneakily over my shoulder at the preceding paragraphs. "Let's see how many of our favourite adjectives you've got in... Oh, yes, quite a few from the World Standings there! For instance, 'arcane' (which has come up from nowhere to number 159 over the last 10 years), 'prestigious' (which hardly existed 40 years ago and is now up to 188) and 'ongoing' (which reached a dizzy 56 a few years back and is now down to 143 and still slipping).

"'Mercurial' – quite nice. 'Situate' – very nice! And I'm glad you managed to avoid the temptation to use the word 'insightful', which is an American import which should never have been allowed to talk a foothold here.

"Of course," says Oscar Beussberger, "as a scientist of language I should just be observational and not – are you ready for this horrible adjective? – judgemental. But when you work with adjectives every day you get to love some, loathe others. Can a zoo-keeper be blamed for preferring okapi to rats? I think not. Can I be blamed for liking 'inspissated' more than 'squamous'? Surely not..."

But how do adjectives become popular? What makes an epithet emerge from dusty years of disuse into the limelight?

"Well, one way is through boredom. People get bored with saying 'bland' all the time. Then they find that 'anodyne' means roughly the same thing and sounds grander, so they start using that instead. 'Solipsistic' means, roughly, egotistical on a grand scale, so that has started to creep in instead of 'selfish'.

"Incidentally, I was very impressed to see you use the word 'discrete'. That's almost died out now, because people have forgotten the difference between 'discreet' and 'discrete'. 'Discreet' is driving 'discrete' out, just as minks crowd out the otter."

Oscar Beussberger has seen adjectives come and go in his time, rising and falling in the lists. Once "psychedelic" was in the top 10. Now it's not even in the top 1,000. "Epiphanic" has come from nowhere recently, whereas "cathartic" is ebbing. "Holistic" is right up there, which is good work, especially considering that the word didn't even exist 100 years ago.

"'Formulaic' is a word much used by lazy TV executives, as if there were any other kind of TV executive," says Oscar. "Nobody else uses it. But it's still managed to creep up to No 125.

"'Feral' was very trendy for a while, but is fading now. 'Iconic' is very big, of course, and so is 'ironic' – actually, it's quite odd when you get two words very similar but both thriving, like 'ironic' and 'iconic'. One usually tends to drive the other out. Because of the bawdy familiarity of the word 'fornicate', you don't see the word 'formicate' much, although it's the only word to use of ants swarming. Similarly, ever since 'homophobic' hit the top 100, we haven't heard much of 'homophonic'."

But Oscar Beussberger's chief work at the moment is putting the finishing touches to the Adjective of the Century Poll, in which voting takes place next week. Which will be the literate public's choice for top adjective of the age? Will "pristine" carry it off? Has "dysfunctional" got a real chance? How about "entrepreneurial"?

All the runners tomorrow, plus a voting form!

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We must not be kept in the dark when we travel

THERE SEEM no words strong enough to describe the horror of the killings in Uganda. It is beyond understanding how a trek to observe gorillas can turn into such a disaster. But change must come out of this tragedy, if it is not to be remembered as an inexplicable, nasty massacre far away, devoid of sense or meaning.

No one should blame the tourists themselves for the catastrophe that overtook their party. The situation in southern Uganda had stabilised since the chaos of 1994, when the implosion of neighbouring Rwanda threatened the whole region with bloody tribal conflict. Voluntary agencies such as the World Wide Fund for Nature were active in the Bwindi Impenetrable Forest, where the tour was ambushed. To the casual observer, the area seemed relatively safe.

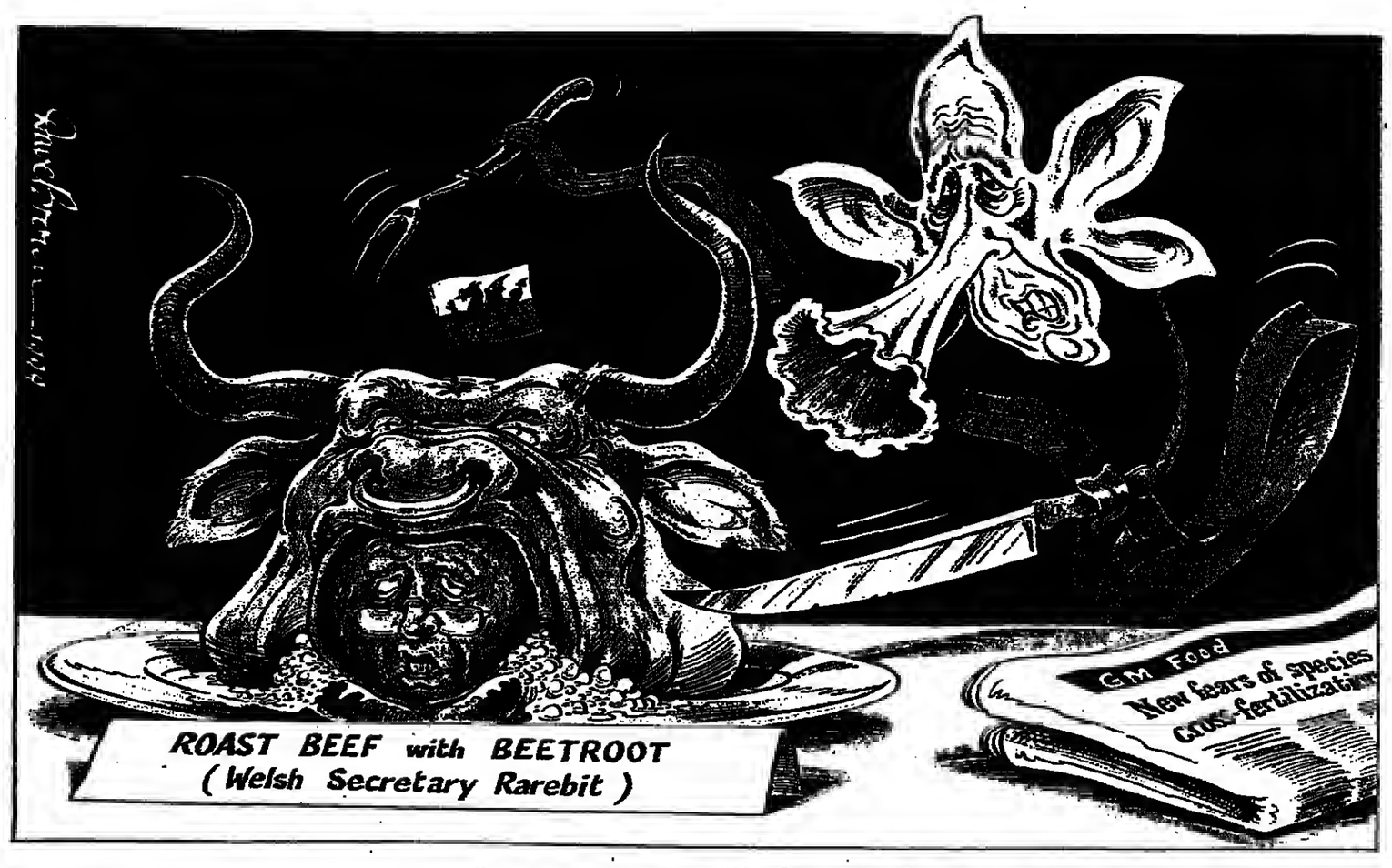
All the same, we should all learn to be more wary when we travel abroad. Cheap air travel has brought potentially dangerous parts of the world within reach of more people than ever before; countries as diverse as Chechnya, Yemen, even the United States, have all spelt danger for Britons in the recent past.

When we travel abroad, we do not simply take ourselves. We also carry the baggage of our national identity, and the policy of the state to which we belong. It is reported that Britons were singled out for torture by their Hutu captors, who blamed Britain for aiding the Tutsi minority their tribe so brutally massacred in the Rwandan genocide. Britons travelling in regions such as the Middle East, where they may be at risk given the continuing military action in Iraq, should take note.

Foreign Office guidance in this case, as ever, was cautious. In this it was not alone; the US State Department had not issued any advice on the south of the country, but concentrated instead on the north. The warning the Foreign Office settled for spoke of rebel activity, and a situation that could change quickly. So far, so good.

What it did not mention was last August's kidnappings in the same forest, across the border in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Two Swedes and a New Zealander who were taken captive then are still missing. Foreign Office advice should have been more specific. Such warnings are sensitive for those overseeing our diplomatic relations with these countries, but diplomacy should take second place to the safety of British citizens.

While no blame for the killings attaches to officials, they should in future be more forthcoming in their advice. Although we are all at liberty to take risks in the course of travels that benefit both ourselves and – usually – those poorer countries we visit, we should be properly informed about the dangers to which such holidays may expose us.



General Obasanjo must make good his promise

WITH THE tragedy of the hostages in Uganda and civil war in Sierra Leone and Angola, it would be easy to view Africa as beyond the pale. But to despair of the continent as a whole would be to underestimate the real progress being made in Africa by Africans.

Nigeria's election campaign constitutes a welcome first step towards constructing a new, non-violent democratic forum within which to resolve old differences. Military leaders have held the reins of power for 28 of the 38 years since the end of British colonial rule, squandering through corruption and despotism the riches of Africa's most populous nation. The election of the retired general Olusegun Obasanjo may not have been the squeaky-clean affair international observers would have wished. But General Obasanjo's opponent Chief Olu Falae's roars of disapproval and claims of widespread vote-rigging should be taken with a pinch of salt. The evidence suggests that where election fraud took place, it was carried out fairly equally for both candidates, by supporters swept up by the excitement of the end of dictatorship. And all the indications are that the end result of this imperfect ballot is roughly in line with the wishes of the Nigerian population. Worryingly, the military made similar accusations of ballot fraud after the 1993 elections, in order to annul the result and hold on to power.

Political parties engaging in clumsy attempts at ballot-rigging should not be allowed to jeopardise such a promising opportunity to call time on 15 years of military rule. Widespread desire for the election to succeed and the sheer margin – 63 per cent of the vote – with which Obasanjo achieved victory should be enough to ensure a smooth transition, without the bloodshed that has marred previous disputed elections. Nigeria's current leader, General Abdulsalami Abubakar, has pledged to make way for Obasanjo in May. A southerner of the Yoruba tribe who remains on good terms with the north-dominated military, Obasanjo is uniquely placed to unite his troubled country and steer it towards realising its oil-rich potential. Persuading the north to release its grip on the nation and bring the south on board has been his first triumph. He must now be encouraged to hold to his pledge to stamp out corruption and prise government from the grip of the military.

'Eat my shorts'

GERTRUDE STEIN may have been right when she said that "remarks are not literature", but literature no longer provides us with our most memorable remarks. That the *Oxford Dictionary of 20th-Century Quotations* is to include Bart Simpson's catchphrase, "eat my shorts", is proof, were it needed, of the creative power of television. It also proves, as BR Haydon wrote in his *Table Talk*, that "there must be more malice than love in the hearts of all wits".

Where the monarchy leads, will the Government dare to follow?

ANNE MCELVOY

The Palace foresees a long game, but the Government is less cool about Scottish nationalism

THE UNITED Kingdom is on a constitutional and political magical mystery tour: the inevitable but underestimated consequence of devolution. The Prime Minister's unspoken fear has always been that the process he set in train will loosen the bonds that tie the UK together. Down the road at Buckingham Palace, the same concerns keep the lights burning late. The signs are that the Royal Family is coping rather better with the challenge than New Labour.

If it is imminent elections you want won, then New Labour's is the number to call. But the slick efficiency of its machine disguises a certain rickety ness when it comes to dealing with longer-term strategic problems. So depressing for the ambitious cast of officials at Millbank is the prospect of a posting to the party's Scottish HQ that prospective candidates for a northern transfer keep their excuses nervously burnished. For the Blairites, Kier Hardie House is the equivalent of a mosquito-infested colony they would rather not explore.

The monarchy, by contrast, has lost no time in seeking to ride the wave of devolution. It has channelled some of its brightest advisers to the task of predicting how Scotland will behave and what the consequences for The Firm will be. So it has been judiciously leaked that Princess Anne, the most marketable of the shop-soiled stock of first-rank royals, will make Holyrood House in Edinburgh her official home, and adopt the higher profile in Scotland. The ensuing tag, Anne Queen of Scots, would a few years ago have had palace courtiers fainting dead away. Now it is likely to be tolerated with a benign smile.

The expanded Scottish operation is the canniest attempt yet to ensure that devolution gives the monarchy what it needs most if it is to survive a general slump in faith – a revived role as the main symbolic expression of the unity of the Kingdom in a devolved and still devolving Britain; a permanence at the House of Change.

Under Queen Elizabeth's rule, its image had become that of an essentially English family, which takes its holidays in Scotland and has the tougher specimens of its children educated there. That is patently not good enough at a time when nationalist instincts are deepening.

Prince Charles's meeting last year with the SNP leader, Alex Salmond, was a recognition of that party's potential importance to the future of the monarchy. The Prince's advisers were anxious to emphasise that he was taking Scottish sensibilities seriously and intended to approach future constitutional reform in "a calm and open spirit".

That is a rather emollient way for a future monarch to approach a force whose ultimate aim is to turn a major part of the UK into a republic. For its part, the SNP is aware that the Royal Family remains the most widely accepted symbol of the UK, and that it will widen its appeal to the Scottish middle classes only by avoiding the kind of strident anti-monarchism exemplified by the late Willie Harrison.

If the Palace foresees a long tactical game in Scotland, the Government is far less cool about the prospect of Scottish nationalism. It is still feigning deafness to the potential of the SNP to emerge as the leading party – unlikely in the first elections for the new parliament in May, but perfectly thinkable in the election after that.

Even before the make-up of a parliament is decided this time round, the pace of argument is being set north of the border. This week, as Mr Blair prepares for his least favourite speech of the year, the address to the Scottish Labour Party conference, a popular left-wing candidate, John McAllion, has declared that Labour should drop its resistance to the principal of independence: "The Scottish Labour party exists not to defend the Union with England but to defend the interests of the Scottish people."

The Government's response to separatist voices is that the continued existence of the Union serves the people of Scotland best, and that divorce would lead to impoverishment and a narrowing of political and economic horizons. But the rising Labour generation there is not so sure. Douglas Alexander, anointed as Mr Blair's Scottish favourite before the last election, has privately warned London that bashing the nationalists will backfire on Labour and that the party needs to accept the inevitability of calls for greater autonomy and adapt its policies accordingly.

Nor are those with long careers ahead as blind as the Government appears to be to the impact on Scotland of British entry in EMU. Membership of the Euro zone and deeper integration would encourage Scotland to conduct more of its business through the EU than through Westminster. A single European currency is an invitation to Scotland to pursue independence from England. European institutions are far more encouraging towards federally structured countries than large, centralised states.

These uncertainties are compounded by a further strain between the directions of the English and Scottish Labour parties. New Labour's revisionist zeal never penetrated north of the border. Middle Scotland remains a very different place from middle England – less atomised, with higher expectations of the state's continued role in the provision of public services, and more suspicious of the market's advance.

Donald Dewar, Labour's prospective First Minister in Edinburgh, has sought to stem criticisms that the party is becoming too distant from the Scottish socialist tradition by adopting a more rousing egalitarian and redistributionist language than would be acceptable in England. A couple of years ago such variation would have been deemed "off message". Now, the variation is the message.

Even after Mr Dewar weeded out the more overt members of the awkward squad among the prospective candidates for the parliament, the list of public-sector workers, trade unionists and veterans of local town halls exudes a rich Old Labour patina. Looking at the Labour candidate list, you do wonder why Mr Blair went to such undignified lengths to stop Rhodri Morgan in Wales, when there are a lot more dogged lefties set for political stardom in Edinburgh.

Being in Scotland these days makes me aware of how slow we in England have been to understand that devolution as a process raises pressing questions about the status of what is left behind. Alex Salmond spoke last week of Britishness as an idea in decline – an identity without real substance. I hope he is not right.

We badly need to find a way to articulate a New Britishness in which the identities of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland exist securely and harmoniously within a single context. The Crown alone is not strong enough to hold us together. Devolution should concentrate all our minds on what we are, and what we wish to be. A vacuum is already being created which English nationalism will sooner or later expand to fill. We had better be ready for it.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"I will have to go home for a lie down – then I'll watch EastEnders."
Beryl Bainbridge, novelist, on winning the W H Smith literary prize

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

"There is nothing so absurd but some philosopher has said it."
Marcus Tullius Cicero, Roman orator

MONITOR

ALL THE NEWS OF THE WORLD

Middle East comment on the Israeli air-strikes on Lebanon

THE REAL conqueror in the Lebanon is Syria. An Israeli withdrawal would deprive Damascus of its excuse for occupying its neighbor, a founding member of the UN whose independence was never formally recognized by Damascus. Once out of Lebanon, Israel will have the tools and legitimacy with which to concoct, whether openly or quietly, an ongoing effort to ostracize Syria diplomatically, so long as it pulls the strings of an actively belligerent Hizbullah.
Jerusalem Post, Israel

A GLIMPSE of the obvious seems to have escaped most of the Israeli political community: Continued defiance of a United Nations Security Council resolution through an illegal, repressive and savage occupation of south Lebanon will inevitably inspire armed resistance, and that in turn will bring casualties. The Israelis in general and Netanyaho – with only a little over 10 weeks to go to the elections – would be foolish to believe that domestic opinion favors such action. The Israelis may invade as often as they choose but every action will make it that much harder for their government to make the inevitable compromises and to learn to live in peace with their neighbors.
The Star, Lebanon

SINCE THE beginning of the Lebanon War 14 years ago, 1,539 soldiers have been killed there, 162 of those casualties occurring during the period of Netanyahu's government. How can it be said, on the one hand, that Israel must not withdraw its forces without security and normalisation agreements with Syria, and then, on the other, to waste three years without exchanging a single word with the Syrians?
Haaretz, Israel

DOES ISRAEL imagine that Syria, Lebanon and the rest of the Arab peace-loving nations and freedom-loving people will allow it to profit by its insolent and perfidious aggression and annexation and to dictate terms from the position of aggressors seeking to wrest by force that which belongs to Palestine, Syria and Lebanon? For one and all, real peace means Israel's withdrawal from the occupied territories.
Teshreen, Syria

PANDORA

STEVIE WONDER (pictured) can fly – official. We know it must be true because President Clinton said it was. During a White House dinner for the Ghanaian leader, Jerry Rawlings, Clinton revealed that Rawlings, whose career was strictly Air Force, had once let Wonder pilot his personal 10-seat Fokker jet.

"There was sensitivity in his hands," Rawlings added. "People who can see could not fly as well as he did." Rawlings added that a French camera crew captured the feat on video. But Wonder asked them to can the tape because "some people might think he wasn't blind".

AN EAGLE-EYED reader noticed that during the Celtic Manor Hotel lunch this week, where Prince Charles conspicuously tucked into a slice or two of Welsh beef, HRH sported the tie of the Welsh Black Cattle Society, which sent the heir a joint of meat for his 50th birthday. This stunt has the dabs of the Palace spin doctor Mark Boland all over it; saucy courtiers say he's trying to move public perception of Charles from being a Natural Law type who chats with plants to a red-blooded carnivore flirting with lawlessness.

WHAT WAS that little clicking sound? Why, it was an account closing. It's a sound the Royal Bank of Scotland may be hearing more of in future. We can only speculate about what the normally canny Scots financiers were thinking of when they hooked up to create a direct banking operation with the American televangelist Pat Robertson – but it certainly wasn't the bank's public profile. Robertson is leader of the 700 Club, a satan-obsessed, gun-lovin', queer-hatin' Christian fundamentalist pressure group. What next? The Co-op offering discounts for customers holidaying in Burma?

LISTENERS CATCHING Radio 4's inter-uterine discussion this week between the feminist *grande dome* Germaine Greer and the tough bitch queen Julie Burchill surely revelled in the show's sisterly solidarity. Julie ticked off Germaine for not condemning female circumcision. (Burchill: "Without your clitoris, you're only half a woman." Greer: "A clitoris isn't half what a woman is." Burchill: "Maybe not to you.") They moved on to hirsute females, with Germaine regretting that her own god-daughter should feel embarrassed about her hairy upper lip.

"Immac," Julie counselled. "Deal with it and forget about it."

A silence fell.

"Try Arianna Huffington with a depilatory," said Germaine, cattily. "Have you *seen* her?"

"Covered in it," agreed Julie. "Like a little monkey..."

They sniggered. Does the famously vain former Ms Stassinopolous know her stray hairs are the subject of such levity among the higher *feministas*?

A DISTRESSING trend on these shores: thirtysomethings taking PlayStation to dinner parties. Apparently these socially confused individuals find the prospect of putting Crash Bandicoot through his paces more exciting than eating, chatting, flirting or any of the other stuff people do around the table. Sony will launch a palm-sized PlayStation later this year, (it's already being dubbed the 21st-century Gameboy), so addicts of Pool Shark will be able to play in their pockets while mouthing bland encomia about the hostess's culinary expertise.

"LET ALL the racists among us move to that shabby little hole called Eltham," urges the tabloid columnist Tony Parsons. But is Eltham really the natural home of the nation's bigots? No – there are only 491 BNP voters there, 1.1 per cent of the electorate. Pandora can reveal that Britain's scummiest constituency is West Bromwich West. The National Democrats, a National Front offshoot, garnered 4,181 crosses at the 1997 election to take 11.4 per cent of the poll. The seat's incumbent is Speaker Betty Boothroyd. Others with large numbers of ignorant voters include government Chief Whip Anne Taylor (Dewsbury, 5.2 per cent BNP) and the social security minister Stephen Timms (East Ham, 3.2 per cent BNP). And Tony Banks's plea for Mohamed al-Fayed to get a passport probably won't play well with the 1,198 BNP boneheads on his West Ham turf. It reminds Pandora of the gag about the BNP member who was so stupid that the others noticed.

Contact Pandora by e-mail: pandora@independent.co.uk

A little bit of slap and fickle

YVONNE ROBERTS

The model is a woman who looks like a geisha girl with bags of marble where her arms should be

IT'S A tale of slap and fickle – and its bound to end in tears. Madonna is rumoured to be the new face of Max Factor. Yes, that company for middle-of-the-road women in the middle of their lives with middles that have gone missing, are to have as their aspirational slap model a woman who, at a recent awards ceremony, looked like a geisha girl with bags of marble where her arms should be.

It's an irony of the make-up game that while millions of women have a lifelong loyalty to certain products (my aunt, aged 83, is struggling now that a foundation, called Veloute, which she has used for 65 years, is virtually extinct), the cosmetic companies are notoriously fickle in their choice of a Face to push their paint. The models come and go, some at great cost. Yardley recently went bust having spent £32m literally tying Linda Evangelista up in knots for a bondage advertising campaign. (Whip away those wrinkles?)

The reasons fashion commentators have given so far for Max Factor's choice of Madonna are varied and contradictory, but what they all help to illustrate is the advertising industry's hopeless, not to mention hysterical, misunderstanding of how to appeal to that eight-million-strong female army, aged between 35 to 55, known inelegantly as the baby-boomer generation.

It was all so easy in the Fifties. Then, there were two ways of persuading women to part with their perfumed pound. The first was to treat womanhood as a series of dangerous ailments – halitosis, unwanted hair, and most dreaded of all, underarm BO. "Are you really lovely to love?" asked a 1953 ad for creamy, smooth Fresh antiperspirant. Now, of course, we know there's a touch more to *amour* than a stick of deodorant. The second much-loved pitch was to promise a man: "She's Lovely! She's Engaged! She uses Pond's Cold Cream!"

Women today treat hygiene problems as one of life's minor hurdles rather than as a genocidal threat to the weaker sex. The older generation are too cynical to expect Mr Right to emerge, like a genie, from a bottle of foundation. Instead, they expect minor miracles. It's not a famous face that has the pulling power but the promise that a product can hold back time; erase lines; cancel out crow's feet. Only mad women believe it, of course, but it signals that you're making a bit of an effort.

"Bit of an effort" is the crucial phrase. Madonna is shorthand for wholesale obsession. And that, I suspect, few baby boomers find attractive in a woman who's supposed to be an aspirational role model. She and Cher personify the caught-in-aspic "youth" that requires hours of exercise, self-denial and no booze. Basically, for most baby boomers, life's too full and fraught for that.

One commentator has suggested that Madonna's attraction to Max Factor is her "ability to constantly reinvent herself". But that's no magnet for the older woman, either. They've been there and done that. They've mutated through Sixties false eyelashes and Seventies glam-rock to, in the middle of their lives, anything which makes them feel at ease. Of course, they're willing to make amendments to the basic plan – but nothing radical. That's not timidity – it's faith in the tried and tested. So, in the magazine makeover of a woman's face and wardrobe, it's sometimes hard to see the change. And often, the "before" is better.

Isabella Rossellini was sacked as the Lancôme woman because she was deemed too old. Yet her appeal was precisely right. She looked comfortable with her age, maturing gracefully, in control and nobody's fool. Now we have Madonna, billed by the pushers of pan-stick as "strong" and "confident" but, to some, conveying the opposite impression. Behind the money-making exhibitionism, she appears a sad, confused chameleon. A person yet to sort out what she wants in life – and time is moving on.

Kathy Phillips of *Vogue* suggests, in a different twist, that the choice of Madonna may lie with the glamour of her Hollywood connections. A return to Max Factor's original roots, since, in the past, it too hired stars like Rita Hayworth.

In May 1951, in an American magazine called *Silver Screen*, Rita gave her "Tips for Teenagers". Newly married to a prince – "Wouldn't you like one, too?" – she described how she had had her hairline lifted, a widow's peak created, her hair dyed red, and she'd learnt to do as she was told. The magazine commented admiringly: "...few women have more willingly submitted to becoming the passive material out of which a myth can be created... to please men."

Madonna may not be passive, but she's certainty a myth. Better to look at – than look like. If Max Factor is serious about bringing the profitable hlush back to our cheeks, then like others in the world of advertising, it needs to learn who the older woman truly is. Then dump who they think she ought to be.

The Third Way will drive Europe into a slump

KEN LIVINGSTONE

The so-called American economic revival has simply created low-paid, low-skill, casual jobs

TONY BLAIR'S intervention at his meeting with other left-wing European heads of government was clear and firm. Europe can adapt to the future only if it mimics the United States' more open and dynamic economy.

This will not have come as a surprise to comrades Jospin and Schröder, who have become used to the Prime Minister's lectures about the need for a Third Way for Europe. The British Government remains convinced that the reason Europe's unemployment rate is so unacceptably high is because of the dead hands of regulation, high taxes, redistribution and excessive public spending.

If only Europe would slim down its welfare state to British levels and cut corporation tax to something closer to America's, Europe too could experience a long economic boom with tens of millions of new jobs created. Of course, we should also have to accept laxer standards of environmental protection and food hygiene and put up with larger doses of hormones and genetically modified crops, but this would merely bring Europe into line with the existing demands of the American-dominated World Trade Organisation.

When we look at the American economy, there is no denying that it is experiencing its longest post-war boom and the lowest levels of unemployment in a generation. The question we have to ask, however, is whether this is because of or in spite of America's low-tax, low-regulation economy. Equally, we need to look beyond bland generalities before we simply echo the Thatcherite refrain about the causes of Europe's high level of unemployment.

It is all too easy to paint a nightmarish vision of the downside of the American dream, with nearly a third of the population having no guaranteed access to health care, and levels of homelessness, drug addiction and violence that dwarf anything we see even in the most deprived pockets of Europe.

Much of the so-called American economic revival has simply seen the creation of low-wage, low-skill and casual employment replacing the high-wage, high-skill manufacturing jobs that have been wiped out as large American corporations relocate their production to Mexico and other low-wage areas.

Of course, it is not surprising that America has had a sustained period of growth, given that virtually the whole of the rest of the global economy is subordinated to serve US needs. In recent years this American boom has been continued by a vastly overvalued stock market boom that everybody accepts poses catastrophic risks to the global economy when it comes to an end.

If the world is lucky, Alan Greenspan's Federal Reserve Bank and Bill Clinton will be able to manage a soft landing for America's stocks and shares that will snuff out the economic boom that has so mesmerised Tony Blair and Gordon Brown. If the worst happens and America's stock market spirals out of control, then this will be the final straw that tips the world economy into a re-run of the Thirties. Just why Europe should wish to replicate America's weaknesses is something that will fully require Tony Blair's persuasive skills to explain.

The so-called sickly European economy represents almost a mirror image of the American dream/nightmare. Unlike America, Europe sustains a huge balance of trade surplus and, with the exception of the vastly overvalued British stock market, the rest of Europe's stock markets are not big enough or overheated enough to drag down the real productive strength of the European economy. Europe therefore does not need to be propped up with inflows of funds from Japan or from anywhere else, and as a result is better insulated from global turmoil than is the US.

In contrast to America's low-skill jobs boom, Europe has fought to try to preserve high-skill, hi-tech employment and, to sustain this, continues to have a level of investment 25 per cent higher than that of the US. Equally, Europe has avoided the worst excesses of human downsizing and environmental despoliation that have become a defining characteristic of corporate America. The grosser inequalities of wealth that disfigure Britain and America have been avoided, with Europe's top executives earning substantially less than their Anglo-American counterparts.

So, given this record, why are we constantly told that Europe must develop along American lines? There is no doubt that the crisis of high unemployment is Europe's Achilles' heel, but the shocking reason behind

Mr Blair at the European Socialist congress in Milan *Reuters*

Europe's high unemployment is that it was a deliberately self-inflicted policy decision undertaken in order to prepare for the introduction of the euro. The problem has its historical roots in the collapse of the Weimar Republic and the rise of Nazism in Germany. This led succeeding generations of German politicians to fear a return of the great inflation that they believe opened the way for Hitler's rise to power. The response of Germany's post-war chancellors has been to stamp on the very first signs of inflation.

Normally these tight money policies would have undermined Germany's post-war boom, had it not been for the fact that Germany massively undervalued the mark, thus guaranteeing that its exports would be cheap enough to undercut its British and American rivals throughout the global markets.

As Germany prepared for the introduction of the euro, the undervaluation of the mark was conveniently forgotten in place of the mantra that Germany's success was due to tight money and a firm grip on inflation. These policies were then imposed on the rest of Europe in the run-up to the introduction of the euro. The result was obvious. European currencies became overvalued, exports were squeezed and unemployment soared. Two years ago, Germany led the rest of Europe in a quiet devaluation of their currencies against the pound and the dollar, thus preparing for a boom to coincide with the introduction of the euro.

Sadly, Europe's policy-makers had not foreseen the downswing in the global economy that began in Asia and has now snuffed out Europe's embryonic recovery at just the moment that the independent central bank has come into power. Unless the European Central Bank now dramatically cuts interest rates, Europe faces more unemployment.

It is these massive underlying economic forces that have to be understood if Europe is to tackle the problem of unemployment. Superficial comparisons between Europe and America will lead us into depression, not into a Third Way.

The BBC has not betrayed its values

PODIUM

WILL WYATT

From a speech by the chief executive, BBC Broadcast, to the All Party Media Group of MPs at Westminster

NEXT WEEK we shall no longer find *News at Ten* in the ITV schedule – the biggest indicator yet that ITV and the BBC are not in the same game.

It is a perfectly sound commercial decision for ITV to move news in order to grow their peak-time – their most valuable – audience.

Their network centre's job is to run the most profitable channel possible. It does so by offering a schedule that has many high-quality programmes, but it is a schedule that needs to shove inconvenient genres out of the way if they inhibit revenue.

The BBC will retain its main evening news at nine o'clock. Full stop. We will retain our early evening news at six o'clock so that we offer two news programmes on our main channel in peak time.

The move of *News at Ten* is the most significant milestone yet in a journey that began in the early Nineties. The bridges between us and ITV have come crashing down. There's now more clear water between us than ever before.

We saw ITV move its Sunday evening religious programme, *Highway*, out of peak time. We've seen the end of *This Week*. We saw a narrowing of the range of programmes to be found in the evening schedule.

And whereas once we could have a sensible conversation with ITV about not chasing each other's Saturday evening in order not to confuse viewers, those conversations have ended. When our schedulers sought a discussion to avoid scheduling clashes between *Omnibus* and *The South Bank Show*, ITV wasn't interested.

The job of the BBC is a very different one.

In 1995, during a weekend of 50th anniversary celebrations for VE Day, BBC Television broadcast 11 programmes in three days on the subject. ITV showed three. On VJ Day, the BBC broadcast five factual programmes. ITV made no special arrangements.

Last year, on the momentous day of the Good Friday agreement, it was the BBC that opened up the schedule to capture the story. I remember Dennis Murray, our distinguished Ireland correspondent, telling me how proud he was of the BBC as a public service broadcaster, that on a bank-holiday the planned schedule was elbowed aside to give proper space to one of the most important events in Ireland's history.

Ratings are important to the BBC, but they are far from being the only important measure. Our task is to provide value for every household and we need to reach large numbers of people, particularly on BBC1, in order to do that.

We've done well over the last few years. Increased competition has eaten away at the share of the established broadcasters, but we've pegged our losses at half those of ITV, whose share has fallen 10 points in eight years.

We have done this with a BBC schedule that has been distinctly different from ITV's. Share will continue to fragment and we shall strive to mitigate this, to reach large numbers, but to do so with a schedule that will be increasingly differentiated as ITV changes.

We track that difference by measuring the number of genres that regularly feature in the peak-time schedule.

We shall continue to have *Songs of Praise* in the early Sunday evening all year round, science in peak time all year round, consumer programmes in peak time all year, current affairs in peak time all year, and the news twice in peak time all year round.

And there will be series such as *The Human Body* and *The Life of Birds* on BBC1 – big investments in time and money in programmes that are designed not to maximise ratings but to offer unique learning experiences to the widest audiences. It is what we do.

I have tried to make clear, in the hurly-burly of modern broadcasting, behind the gossip, the noise around celebrities, the occasional alarums and excursions, that the BBC is not so quietly fulfilling the public service promises of information, entertainment and education, which have been its holy trinity since John Reith took over the British Broadcast Company, as it first was.

We now seek to carry these same values, the same quality, into the digital world. We have begun with News 24; BBC Choice for entertainment and sport aimed at a younger audience; and BBC Parliament; and we shall launch a BBC learning channel in June. We have embraced the Internet, which we believe to be the third medium of broadcasting, with BBC Online, which is the largest and most visited content site in Europe, led, again, by news and education.

So our first steps in the new age are news, entertainment, Parliament and education. I think that the late Lord Reith would have approved.

Get a grip on reality, Monica

DEBORAH ORR

You'd think Monica had had enough of being a victim, but she will never have enough of it

Monica Lewinsky, left, with Barbara Walters who interviewed her for ABC. Lewinsky talked of her 'dysfunctional family' *AP/Courtesy ABC News, Virginia Sherwood*

"IT IS a parable of our times, just as Diana's was." (Andrew Morton on *Monica's Story*)

And so it begins. Tonight, Monica Lewinsky's first television interview will be broadcast in the US. Tomorrow morning, extracts from Andrew Morton's book about her will start serialisation on both sides of the Atlantic. Tomorrow evening, an interview by Jon Snow will be screened on *Channel 4 News*. On Friday, Andrew Morton's book about her will hit the streets, and Lewinsky will begin a book tour to publicise it. The rebranding of Monica Lewinsky has begun. It is already working its magic on me.

Until now, I've regarded Monica Lewinsky sympathetically. She was young and attractive and clearly did not know how to control or respect her own sexuality. She embarked on an ill-advised affair with a man who should have known better, but didn't. She was tricked and betrayed by people posing as her friends. She was publicly smeared, slandered and lied about. She had her life, as she had known and imagined it, ruined as part of a political witch hunt that wouldn't have gained any currency were it not for one fact: the President of the United States is a sexually predatory hypocrite so obsessed with power that even when he'd become "leader of the free world" he still craved the validation he gained from seducing impressionable young women.

She has been humiliated before the eyes of the world. Now that her ordeal is over (or could be if only she'd let go), Clinton is still President, and she is $2m in debt.

But she is, so her supporters say, intelligent. An intelligent woman in her position could earn $2m quite easily. She could grant just one interview to a commercial television network, accept no fee for it, but strike a deal whereby her legal fees are paid off by the television company. In fact, she has received no payment from ABC, which has the rights to tonight's interview. The company will earn $35m from advertising during the broadcast alone, before they even start to syndicate it around the world. ABC could have wiped out Lewinsky's debt at one fell swoop.

But Lewinsky is clearly, however, not intelligent enough to have learned anything, either from her own five-year ordeal or from scrutiny of the rest of the life of the last woman to process her life through the agency of Andrew Morton, media photographers and high-profile television interviews. No good can come of this. The early signs are that the entire media fest will be cloying, sentimental, self-pitying and pointless. If Lewinsky wants to put this most sorry of affairs behind her, she is going about it in an extraordinarily counter-intuitive fashion.

First, the US television interview in which Lewinsky reveals to heavy-hitting Barbara Walters that although she no longer loves President Clinton, and while she is sometimes "angry", she still has "warm feelings" towards him.

Warm feelings? What's wrong with her? Does she imagine that her "Big Guy" returns warm feelings towards "that woman"? Does she think it's all right to be dropped, denied, accused of being a stalker and branded as mentally deranged? If she forgives this man, then that goes a long way towards explaining why the rest of America has found it so easy to do so. It has to be because they're all misogynists, including Lewinsky herself. Not only can they not tell right from wrong any more, they can't even tell right from left.

During this interview, Lewinsky also apologises for the first time to the "official Clinton women", telling Chelsea that she is also from "a dysfunctional family". That's quite a comfort to Chelsea, I'm sure, and as for Monica's own parents, well, they've been told how dysfunctional they are plenty of times already, and now have therapists to ram that message home to them.

Any further message to other impressionable young girls, like: "don't have affairs with married men with children because generally they use you and dump you, even when they're not president, and it's you who pays the emotional price"; or "when a superior in an office says he'd like to see what's under your skirt, think before you flash your thong, then point out to him that it's none of his business", is conspicuous by its absence.

Learning from your mistakes, and hoping that others might too, is something that a responsible woman might do, and if you take responsibility for yourself, then it's hard to stay a victim. You'd think that Lewinsky might have had enough of being a victim, but instead it's beginning to look like she'll never have enough of it. That's certainly been the message so far in the newspaper serialisation. From *The Mirror's* several days of pre-serialisation serialisation, we've already learned that "Monica was a bright, outgoing strong-willed child. Open and friendly, she was popular, but never quite fitted in with the blonde, thin brat pack".

Sorry, what's the message here? Get the peroxide out from an early age, and pick yourself up an eating disorder. Then you'll never become embroiled in a political sex scandal. No, instead the message is that not being blonde and thin is a genuine disability, which could blight your life, just as it has Lewinsky's. What a pity it wasn't Glenn Hoddle who came up with that one. It would then have been greeted with the contempt that it deserves.

Then there's the Jon Snow interview. Lewinsky was able to talk in much greater detail during this interview, due to reporting restrictions which remain in the United States. Leaks have already flushed out one exclusive revelation, which is that Lewinsky at one point contemplated suicide during her ordeal. Hurrah! Not only is that a healthy reaction to her situation, but it's also healthy that she only considered suicide. If only her desire for self-preservation was greater than her desire for attention. Then we could be sure that she will never contemplate suicide over this matter ever again. Instead, it is her actions now which imperil her most of all.

Finally, there's the Morton book, which from Lewinsky's motives for wanting it written alone, make it sound utterly excruciating. "I'd like to think I will live on in a book. I like to be able to reach up on my bookshelf for one of Shakespeare's plays and I would like to think that people will do that with this book." Or: "I want to be happy. I deserve that much." Or: "I'm not a princess in a royal sense, but I was also wronged by a man who said he loved me." Most appalling of all, is the report from Andrew Golden, who introduced Lewinsky to Morton, on what Lewinsky has told friends she hopes for her future. "All I ever wanted was to be as internationally famous as Princess Diana. I want to be a movie or a media star and I do not want to be known for ever as the woman who brought down a president. I deserve better than that." My, my, Monica Lewinsky believes she deserves a lot. She does indeed have much in common with Princess Diana.

Like Diana, Lewinsky is the victim of a dysfunctional family background which has left her with feelings of inadequacy. While Diana's feelings of inadequacy did not leave her so riven that she doubted her ability to be first, Princess of Wales, then Queen, and to bring up children who would also be monarchs, nor did Lewinsky's disturb her belief – which she still maintains despite the overwhelming evidence to the contrary – that she was just the sort of woman that a president would fall in love with, in the early days before she was an icon to everyone.

Like Diana, she has been hounded by the media, but rather than pack up and live quietly out of the photographers' gaze for a couple of years, and work out a way of living her life that can really make her content, she just wants to stay in that hated spotlight for as long as she can.

Like Diana, she wants lots of money, and she wants too earn it without too much effort. And she wants everyone in the world to love her, admire her, understand her, and feel her pain. Thank heavens that both of these women suffered from low self-esteem. What might they have considered their worth to be if only each of them had had a little self-confidence?

RIGHT OF REPLY

CHRISTOPHER SMALLWOOD

The treasurer of the New Europe group responds to a recent article by Donald Macintyre

POOR DAVID Owen. He may have just launched New Europe, the "first sensible-looking organisation dedicated to campaigning against the euro", as Donald Macintyre puts it, but his latest enterprise is doomed before it starts. Why? Because he is on the "wrong side of history". Or so Mr Macintyre argues.

Yet, as the philosopher Isaiah Berlin remarked, "history has no libretto". In other words, nothing is inevitable.

And the truth is that time is on New Europe's side. The fault lines in the euro edifice are already beginning to show. The nonsense of imposing one interest rate across the whole of Europe is already plain to Oskar Lafontaine as a rate too high for Germany drives that country into recession. And it will be equally so to Bertie Ahern as rates far too low for Ireland send that country up in a blaze of inflation.

When the CBI sees Europe's economies destabilised in this way, it will have to revise the unthinking view that the euro stands for stability and growth. And business will certainly think again when it appreciates the force behind the current Franco-German drive to harmonise taxes, social costs and regulation across Europe. As will the TUC, when the penny drops that this means European levels of unemployment here in Britain.

Given time, British people will realise that being given one vote out of 12 to influence economic decisions in France and Germany in return for surrendering 11 votes out of 12 over what happens here is not good for trade. And, if they do not like what euro bodies decide, they will be able to do nothing about it – democratic accountability will have gone.

Time is on our side. Which is another way of saying that David Owen finds himself on the *right* side of history.

Chasing the deadly dragon

WEDNESDAY BOOK

THE DRAGON SYNDICATES: THE GLOBAL PHENOMENON OF THE TRIADS
BY MARTIN BOOTH. DOUBLEDAY, £17.99

VISITING TOKYO in 1985, I was stunned by my first exposure to the Japanese equivalent of the *Nine O'Clock News*. The entire half-hour was given over to the funeral of a *yakuza* (organised crime) boss, gunned down two days before. The tones of the voiceover were respectfully hushed, as were the strains of background music that played throughout. At no point was I made to feel I was bidding farewell to an arch-criminal. Rather, I might have been watching the obsequies of a crown prince.

It was surreal, as if there was no other news for Japan. How much, I wondered, had NHK, the state broadcaster, been paid? Or was NHK itself a *yakuza* organisation? But no; it was explained to me that the *yakuza* is considered as much part of the order of things Japanese as Mount Fuji or sumo wrestling. Therefore, the demise of a big man merited commemoration.

Reading *The Dragon Syndicates*, I was reminded of this episode; not because the Chinese Triads are ever accorded such overt public respect, but because, as Martin Booth amply demonstrates, they are similarly integral to Chinese tradition. Or, to put it another way, to demystify the Triads is tantamount to demystifying China itself. The opacity of the one is intimately connected to the opacity of the other.

Booth's thesis is straightforward enough. The Triads as criminal fraternities are the descendants of earlier "secret" societies founded on principles of clan alliance, personal indebtedness and mutual protection. They utilised a set of common legends and quasi-religious rituals to bond their members.

The need for secrecy was supplied by political circumstance. Because China is so huge, harsh regimes alone can govern it. But a particular spur to secrecy was provided in 1644, when the Ming dynasty was replaced by the Q'ing. As a result, the majority Han found themselves ruled by the minority Manchu. And this gave rise to endless trouble.

Eventually, the Q'ing dynasty succumbed to the Republic of 1912. Both Sun Yat-sen and Chiang Kai-shek had Triad affiliations, but the latter more than the former. Indeed, Chiang was from his youth an out-and-out gangster and continued in much the same vein even after he and his Kuomintang fighters withdrew to Taiwan to set up a new republic. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, he maintained close links with Triad mobsters in Hong Kong, his plan being to seize the colony and threaten his communist rivals.

An irony of postwar history is that, while Mao Tse-tung rid the mainland of its criminal elements, the US gave clandestine support to a group of remnant Kuomintang on the Sino-Burmese border. But what these Kuomintang were actually engaged in was the development of heroin production.

Enter here the second great fillip to Triad activity: the Chinese diaspora. Although Chinese traders had settled overseas for many hundreds of years, it was Communism's victory that provoked the modern exodus. And with this exodus, numbering hundreds of thousands, went the secret societies and their villains. These, in turn, provided a ready-made network for the marketing of narcotics.

Drug-dealing, however, is only one division of Triad enterprise. Managerially, one kind of crime is much the same as another. Loan-sharking, gambling, prostitution, kidnapping, counterfeiting, smuggling, illegal immigration, assassination and computer fraud are all covered by the Triad charter.

But where Booth's account startles is the extent to which such activities have been deeply seeded in locations as far apart as Amsterdam and Sydney, London and Bangkok, San Francisco and Johannesburg, to the extent that the Triads, sometimes linking up with local mafiosi, are perceived as the architects of a global lawlessness that, sooner or later, will engulf us all.

A Hong Kong karaoke club blazes after a Triad arson attack in which 15 people died

By comparison, the *yakuza* seems almost quaint. *The Dragon Syndicates* is palpably good on such subjects as Triad lore ("bullets are blind, knives have no feeling"), Triad hierarchies, Triad personalities and Triad business methods. However, although Booth has had access to police files in Britain and in Hong Kong, necessarily too many of his sources remain undisclosed. This casts a shadow over some of his more hyperbolic claims.

Thus he gives credence to the legend of the 132 one-kiloton, suitcase-sized nuclear devices the Russians are supposed to have manufactured in the pre-Gorbachev era. The Triads, of course, are involved in distributing those that have gone missing. But while this story has been going the rounds for several years, no one I have ever spoken to believes that these bombs are anything other than an example of Russian blarney. In any case, since when were the Soviets any good at miniaturisation?

However, we should give credit where credit is due. Booth's is a thumping book and has the aura of well researched plausibility in much of what it reveals. Chinatown is never going to be quite the same again.

JUSTIN WINTLE

WEDNESDAY POEM

STRUGNELL'S INCREDIBLE LIGHTNESS OF BEING
BY JOHN WHITWORTH

I am a Modern Poet. People say
It's difficult to understand my stuff.
I tell them they're not up-to-date enough.
That's how it is with Poetry today.

I am a Modern Poet. And a bloke.
Most of us are. I think while Man creates
Woman inspires and appreciates.
Frankly, most Women's poems are a joke:

Their sonnets scan. Their rondels rhyme.
And worse.
Their volumes SELL! Of course they
cannot hope
To pass as poets in the Modern manner.
I scorn to live next door to Sophie Hannah.

No cocoa will I take with Wendy Cope
Girls can't write Poetry.
They write Light Verse.

From John Whitworth's collection 'From the Sonnet History of Modern Poetry', illustrated by Gerald Mangan, published at £7.95 by Peterloo Press, 2 Kelly Gardens, Calstock, Cornwall PL18 9SA

Sir Anthony Nutting Bt

Nutting's political career never recovered after 1956 *Hulton Getty*

ANTHONY NUTTING was one of the nearly men of post-war British politics, seen by many, including Harold Macmillan, as a future leader of the Conservative Party. But the Suez Crisis was to bring all these expectations to an abrupt end, and Nutting, who was only 36 at the time of his resignation, arguably suffered the greatest political loss.

Over 40 years later, historical opinion is still divided as to whether he was the martyr or the self-inflicted casualty of the unfolding dramas following President Nasser's nationalisation of the Suez Canal in July 1956. The high point of Nutting's ministerial career is easier to assess, coming as it did in October 1954 when he negotiated the final stages in Cairo of the Anglo-Egyptian Agreement, the prelude to the withdrawal of British troops from the Canal Zone. This marked a new phase in the history of Anglo-Egyptian relations and brought him into personal contact with President Nasser, of whom he wrote a substantial biography in 1972.

A handsome, elegant figure, Nutting was a protégé of the Foreign Secretary, Anthony Eden, to whom he was much indebted for his rapid political advancement. With his distinguished war record, and glamorous bearing, Nutting's career had many parallels with his mentor (*Punch* depicted him in a cartoon as "Eden's Eden") and, in Churchill's last years as prime minister, Nutting was seen by some as the heir presumptive to Eden, the acknowledged heir apparent.

But the Treasury benches are littered with the bones of future prime ministers, and, unlike Eden after his resignation from Neville Chamberlain's government in February 1938, Nutting left the Commons in 1956 and never held office again. It was a tragic end, in the view of many, unnecessary end to a career that had promised so much, just at the moment when it could have been expected to fulfil all the hopes placed in him by Eden. However Nutting felt himself unable to defend the Sèvres Agreement with France and Israel over the invasion of Egypt, the dilemma that Walter Monckton told him he would have to face in the House of Commons, and for this he paid a heavy personal price. But, as Eden said at the time of his own resignation, "There are occasions when strong political convictions must override all other personal and political loyalties."

He was born in 1920, the third son of Sir Harold Nutting, second Baronet, a wealthy landowner, whose main seat was at Quenby Hall, Leicestershire, in his youngest son's future constituency. As his two elder brothers were killed on active service, Anthony Nutting succeeded to the baronetcy on the death of his father in 1972.

He was educated at Eton and Trinity College, Cambridge. On the outbreak of the Second World War, he joined the Leicester Yeomanry. He was invalided out in 1940 and joined the Foreign Service in Paris. After the fall of France, his intelligence experience was invaluable in Spain in arranging escape routes for Allied Forces. Later he headed the Scandinavian Department of the Foreign Office and in 1942 was Eden's Private Secretary, a post that defined much of his subsequent career and the first stage of a relationship that was to have bitter-sweet consequences.

Nutting's election as Conservative MP for the Melton division of Leicestershire in the Labour landslide of 1945 proved a golden opportunity and he swiftly rose through the party hierarchy, serving as Chairman of the Young Conservatives in 1946 (reinvigorating a flagging organisation); the youngest Chairman of the National Union at the Blackpool Conference of October 1950, and Chairman of the National Executive when the Conservatives returned to office the following year.

Nutting was an obvious candidate for preferment and Eden, whom Nutting would have preferred to see as Prime Minister, sought his services as Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office, advising him never to take a non-departmental job because, however grand the title, that would be when he would be marginalised. When Nutting led a delegation to see Churchill shortly afterwards, the Prime Minister inquired: "Haven't I seen you before?" Nutting explained that he was Chairman of the National Executive and that Churchill himself had recently appointed him to the Foreign Office. "Well, you can't do both jobs," said Churchill and Nutting's path was thereafter firmly set in the international field.

In 1954 he was promoted Minster of State and for two years led, with notable success, the British Delegation to the United Nations and – a harder assignment – to the Disarmament Commission. When Eden finally became Prime Minister in April 1955, Nutting was seen as one of the charmed circle who bore the key of all his counsels. But the skies were about to darken.

In the autumn of 1955, New York papers publicised personal difficulties Nutting was experiencing. However, Eden stood loyally by Nutting, whom he regarded as a key player, resisting pressure from certain elements in the Conservative Party to remove Nutting from the Foreign Office to a less sensitive position. Eden was encouraged by Nutting's robust response to the sacking of Glubb Pasha as Commander of the Arab Legion in March 1956, but the ramifications of the unfolding Suez Crisis from July was to fracture their relationship.

In the absence of the Foreign Secretary, Selwyn Lloyd, who was negotiating with his Egyptian opposite number, Dr Fawzi, in New York, Lord Salisbury was due to reply to the Foreign Affairs Debate on 11 October at the Party Conference in Llandudno, when trouble was anticipated from the right-wing Suez Group, led by Charles Waterhouse. Owing to Salisbury's illness, Nutting was drafted in at a late stage, "as a deputy for a deputy", to read the prepared text.

To placate the right wing, the party managers wanted Nutting to explain that the text was Salisbury's, but the speech was delivered as though it was Nutting's own ("Make no mistake," he said privately beforehand, "this is to be Nutting's day") and the forceful address contributed to the bewilderment his resignation generated in some quarters in November.

Two days after the Llandudno speech Nutting was present at the fateful meeting at Chequers when a French delegation outlined to Eden what became known as "The Plan", whereby the Israelis were to be invited to launch an attack on Egypt across the Sinai Peninsula, after which the French and the British would intervene to separate the combatants and regain the canal. When Eden said to the Duty Secretary, "There's no need to take notes", Nutting knew in his heart that their paths would inevitably diverge.

Nutting's resignation, communicated to Eden on 31 October, was delayed until after the invasion, but complicated by some Conservative backbenchers, now dead, who sought to impugn his integrity by a whispering campaign concerning his private life which they suggested was the real reason he wanted to "bale out" of both his office and his constituency, in an era when divorce proceedings could have profound political consequences for a Conservative MP. When Robert Rhodes James's biography of Eden appeared in 1986, and Suez was once more the topic of debate, Nutting placed a notice in the newspapers reiterating that his "resignation was purely a matter of conscience and principle".

Nevertheless, after his resignation, Nutting was regarded as an outsider in the tribal world of Conservative politics. It was an unhappy time. His first marriage, to Gillian Strutt, ended in divorce in 1959 after 18 years. Though there was never any rapprochement with Eden, Nutting wrote a generous letter to Selwyn Lloyd when he was dismissed as Chancellor of the Exchequer by Macmillan in July 1962 and, for his part, Selwyn Lloyd, who had once described the 1956 resignation as "Much Ado about Nutting", spoke in support of Nutting when he contested (unsuccessfully) East Oldham in the 1966 general election.

After this failure to re-enter mainstream politics, Nutting divided his time between his London homes, where he wrote on Arab affairs, and his farming interests at Achentoul in Sutherland, where he was a willing host. A series of books, of which *Nasser* (1972) was the most consequential, appeared and he was a consultant for the film *Lawrence of Arabia* (1962), another of his biographical subjects. But it was the publication in 1967 of his account of Suez, *No End of a Lesson*, which fluttered the most dovecotes, involving the Cabinet Office and constitutional questions about the Official Secrets Act and a Privy Councillor's oath.

Although Nutting's book was to be superseded by later accounts, its importance lay in the fact that it was the first disclosure by a British minister of the events surrounding the Sèvres Protocol. Many were outraged by the appearance of the book, but Selwyn Lloyd never regarded Nutting's account as being a case of sour grapes. "As a result of it," he wrote, "we have to face a number of important issues", and it influenced Lloyd's decision to publish in due course his own account.

Having waited 10 years to put his side of the story, Nutting was unlucky in its timing, for the publication coincided with the outbreak of the Six Day War, when even some of Eden's former critics were prepared to allow the possibility that contemporary events may have proved Eden to have been right all along. Demands for a debate in Parliament and an inquiry on the model of the Dardanelles Committee in 1916 never took wing.

In his later years, though weakened by arthritis and asthma, Anthony Nutting gave generously of his time to historians and researchers, an important witness to events which had shaped, and then ultimately destroyed his political career.

D. R. THORPE

When he resigned from the Commons over Suez, Selwyn Lloyd described the affair as 'Much Ado about Nutting'. But, as Eden said, 'There are occasions when strong political convictions override all other personal and political loyalties'

Harold Anthony Nutting, diplomat, politician and writer: born Shrewsbury 11 January 1920; Secretary to Anthony Eden 1942; MP (Conservative) for Melton Division of Leicestershire 1945-56; Chairman, Young Conservatives, 1946; Chairman, Conservative National Union 1950-51; Chairman, Conservative National Executive Committee 1951; Under-Secretary, Foreign Affairs 1951-54; PC 1954; Minister of State for Foreign Affairs 1954-56; Leader, UK Delegation to United Nations and United Nations Disarmament Commission, 1954-56; succeeded 1972 as third Bt; married 1941 Gillian Strutt (two sons, one daughter; marriage dissolved 1959), 1961 Anne Gunning (died 1990), 1991 Margarita Sanchez; died London 23 February 1999.

Ruth Gipps

THE COMPOSER, conductor and teacher Ruth Gipps said she had always found it "difficult to understand young people who don't know what they want to be when they grow up". For Gipps, from a young age, it was music.

At first manoeuvred by her mother into appearing as a child pianist, she entered the Royal College of Music in 1937, winning the Caird Scholarship. Here she developed both as a composer with Vaughan Williams and Gordon Jacob and as a pianist. Several contemporaries have remarked on her performance of the Brahms Second Piano Concerto while a student.

When Sir Henry Wood conducted Gipps's tone poem *Knight in Armour* at the last night of the 1943 Proms, he signalled the emergence of a talented new voice. Chamber works had already been heard at the Wigmore Hall, and no musician could have had a more rewarding concert when in Birmingham in March 1945 she was soloist in a Glazunov piano concerto and followed it by playing cor anglais in the first performance of her own First Symphony.

During the Second World War her life was focused on Birmingham, where, in 1942, she married the clarinettist Robert Baker. In 1944, while he was away on war service, she was a full-time orchestral musician (oboe/cor anglais) in the City of Birmingham Orchestra. During the 1940s Birmingham was an active centre of musical creativity as the conductor George Weldon encouraged local composers and played several big works by Gipps, including two symphonies, violin and piano concertos and various tone poems.

As an oboist she was a student of Leon Goossens and she caught the eye of Sir Malcolm Sargent, who asked her to play orchestral cor anglais solos in works such as *The Swan of Tuonela*. When her approachable one-movement Second Symphony was given by the Birmingham Orchestra in October 1946, she seemed to be securely launched as a composer, and it is sad that she did not live to see the revival of this work by the young English conductor Douglas Bostock, due out on CD in April.

Back in a London she "found a changed world". Sir Henry Wood was dead and no one wanted to look at scores of orchestral works, so she turned her attention to chamber music. In 1956 she won the Cobbett prize of the Society of Women Musicians for her Clarinet Sonata, Op 45, the slow movement of which was written at a sitting. "I heard it in my mind," she said "and wrote it down as fast as I could scribble."

Gipps developed a portfolio of activities including directing the City of Birmingham Choir, musical journalism and university extra-mural lecturing. Throughout her life Ruth Gipps was a byword for industry and no-nonsense integrity, and, encountering the feeling against women musicians evident in the 1940s and 1950s, she attempted to establish herself by industry and academic excellence, being awarded an external Durham BMus in 1941, and a doctorate in 1948 for which her composition exercise was her cantata *The Cat*, described by one conductor as "great fun, full of vitality".

Gipps: uncompromising

Gipps's music, which is in most conventional forms except opera, was well received by audiences, but her idiom reflected her student days with Vaughan Williams. It was not forward-looking, even in 1945, and the post-war emergence of an iconoclastic new generation typified by Peter Racine Fricker, and later the establishment of serialism, meant that stylistic issues often stood in the way of objective critical assessment.

Gipps felt her best works were those for orchestra, a view confirmed by the BBC broadcast, in 1983, of her impressive Fourth Symphony under the baton of Sir John Pritchard. More recently she was able to attend the sessions when David Pyatt recorded her remarkable Horn Concerto, not yet issued. Those present who had not encountered her music before remarked on its personality and invention, wanting to hear more.

She could not understand the BBC's bureaucratic procedures for assessing new music submitted, and she fought a despairing and unsuccessful campaign to have her Fifth Symphony broadcast. She was no tactician and spoke her mind bluntly.

She was devoted to her students. First appointed to Trinity College of Music (1959-66) to teach composition and harmony, she moved to the Royal College of Music in 1967 where she filled the vacancy left by the retirement of her composition teacher Gordon Jacob. However, her uncompromising antagonism to avant-garde developments in the 1960s and 1970s became a limitation when she came to teach the London BMus.

Proud of her appointment as a professor of composition at, as she wrote, "my Alma Mater", she taught theory and history for a decade before leaving unhappily in the summer of 1977 to take up the appointment of Senior Lecturer in Music at Kingston Polytechnic, feeling that on the modern music issue at the RCM her "position had become impossible".

The London Repertoire Orchestra filled an enormous gap when she founded it in 1955. Here, every week on Wednesday (chamber ensemble) and Friday (full orchestra), she provided an opportunity of working through a huge span of repertoire, an activity she continued for 31 years.

The cellist Julian Lloyd Webber remembers her capacity to inspire. "Without people like her," he says, "a lot of us would not have had the necessary experience of the repertoire when we first entered the profession." He cites the "infectious enthusiasm" she brought to Elgar's *Enigma Variations* when on one occasion she came to conduct the RCM First Orchestra. With the LRO she also gave intending soloists like Lloyd Webber the opportunity to try through the concerto repertoire, and with him later gave the first London performance of the Bliss Cello Concerto.

The LRO was an example of Gipps's practical vision. Later she also founded the Chanticleer Orchestra. Her work for the music profession was wide and largely unsung. Typical was the establishment of the British Music Information Centre. While Chair of the Composers' Guild in 1967, with Elizabeth Yeomans she did all the donkey work which led to the successful launch of this invaluable institution, and it was not the least of her achievements.

A sports car enthusiast – she had first a 1935 MG, later a 1968 Morgan – Ruth Gipps thought nothing of driving, heavily swathed, through all weathers.

LEWIS FOREMAN

Ruth Dorothy Louisa Gipps, composer, conductor and teacher: born Bexhill-on-Sea, East Sussex 20 February 1921; MBE 1981; married 1942 Robert Baker (one son); died Eastbourne, East Sussex 23 February 1999.

Erich Hartmann

Entrance to prisoner cells, Theresienstadt Gestapo prison (Terezin, Czech Republic): photograph by Hartmann from *In the Camps* (W.W. Norton, 1995). '*Arbeit macht frei*': 'Work makes you free'

WHEN ERICH Hartmann joined the Magnum photographic co-operative in 1951 the direction of the group (and of the time) was photojournalism – but not for Hartmann. He chose a more personal path in which to express himself: the photographs he made for *Fortune* magazine of science and industry showed a uniquely human face.

It was just a step from this phase of his career to his assignments for major corporations to photograph their factories and their workers. He was the first to bring the techniques of photojournalism to corporate photography. By his example he opened an entire new field for photographers whose main venues were newspapers and magazines. He said, "I want to photograph objects in ways they have never been seen before."

His work showed a purity, depth and considered approach, at a time (in the 1970s) when photographs were being extolled for their snapshot quality. He was also an early colourist and he had one-man exhibitions in New York, London, Paris, Amsterdam, Tokyo and a number of cities in Germany.

Hartmann was born in Munich in 1922 and left Germany as a teenager in 1938 when the Nazi threat increased and his family emigrated to America. During the Second World War he volunteered for the US Army and served in Europe. After the war he moved to New York and learned photography as an assistant to a portrait photographer and, from 1948 to 1950, at the New School for Social Research, with Charles Leirens, Berenice Abbott and Alexei Brodovitch. He was first associated with Magnum in 1951 and became a full member in 1954.

In the late 1960s and 1970s he lived in London. He documented the construction of the Britannia aircraft for the Bristol Aeroplane Company and he photographed for the leading colour magazines: the *Sunday Times*, the *Observer* and the *Telegraph*, notably on such stories as "Shakespeare's Warwickshire" and "The Norman Conquest Descendants". For the *Weekend Telegraph* he made sensitive colour pictures of "Styles of English Architecture", in a series of photo-essays for which Sir John Betjeman wrote the words, and he also travelled with Betjeman to the Faeroe Islands.

Later Hartmann returned to Germany where he had lived in the shadow of the Nazis until he was 16, and chose a project for himself: the death camps. He made an unforgettable book, *In the Camps* (1995). He said, "I simply felt obliged to stand in as many of the camps as I could reach, to fulfil a duty that I could not define and to pay a belated tribute with the tools of my profession."

The book is a magnificent tribute. There is hardly a person in it. So solitary is it, so desolate, that we people the pages with our own ghosts, we bring to it our own fears and imagery. These imaginings have the feeling of poetry.

We see a room full of broken shoes; another room of battered satchels; another of torn children's clothes; the windowless barracks in four tiers in which multitudes tried to survive; or a square in which a gallows hangs in the wind. The railway tracks which many took into the camp; a single gas chamber in Auschwitz.

Photographs from the book continue to travel as an exhibition in the United States and Europe; it has been at the Royal Armouries in Leeds since last November.

It is hard to go from examining the book to describe all Erich Hartmann did for the Magnum co-operative when he served on the board or was vice-president (1975 and 1979) or president (1985). Burt Glinn describes how he and Hartmann came to Magnum at the same time, almost 47 years ago:

We have photographed together and met together and consulted together about ethics and journalism, and we have attended 46 Magnum General Meetings, the first with only eight other photographers and the last with more than 50, but all of them passionate, contentious and personal.

He goes on:

Through all these years Erich, more than anyone else, has been my moral compass. No matter how knotty the problem he never settled for the facile compromise. He was always wise, judicious, and ferocious to find the right answer rather than the easy one. When I suspected that I was pursuing my self-interest rather than the common good I would glance over at Erich and if I encountered his quizzically cocked eyebrow I would shut up.

EVE ARNOLD

Erich Hartmann, photographer: born Munich 29 July 1922; married Ruth Bains (one son, one daughter); died New York 4 February 1999.

Jose Quintero

THE THEATRE director Jose Quintero has been credited with one of the most important developments in American theatre of the past 50 years – the emergence of off-Broadway as a viable source of great theatre, both artistically and commercially. He also rescued from neglect the playwright Eugene O'Neill, with whose works he became particularly identified, and was important in establishing the careers of actors Jason Robards, Geraldine Page and Colleen Dewhurst. Quintero's staging of such O'Neill plays as *The Iceman Cometh*, *Long Day's Journey Into Night* and *A Moon for the Misbegotten* has become legendary, and he also had great success with works of Tennessee Williams, Truman Capote and Thornton Wilder.

Off-Broadway as a district was centred after the Second World War around Greenwich Village, its appeal parochial and its shows rarely covered by major critics. That changed forever in 1952 when Quintero directed a revival of Tennessee Williams's *Summer and Smoke*, which had failed on Broadway. Mounted at a theatre co-founded by Quintero, the Circle-in-the-Square, and starring the relatively unknown Geraldine Page, it was reviewed by the *New York Times* critic Brooks Atkinson (because it was by Williams) and he applauded the play, the direction and the performances.

Overnight both Quintero and Page were star names, and the play ran for more than a year, though Quintero was later to refer to his sudden fame as "a curse". The bond that he was later to display with the works of O'Neill (he directed 19 productions of O'Neill plays) was echoed in the similarities between Quintero's personality and that of the tortured playwright.

Quintero was born in 1924 in Panama City, one of four children of a Spanish businessman. "From birth I was branded a disaster," he later recalled, stating that his father had wanted a daughter, since he already had sons, and also disapproved that the boy's skin was darker than anyone else's in the family. His father rejected the boy's attempts to meet his demands throughout his childhood, and later refused to acknowledge Quintero's homosexuality. "I was taken to a brothel by my father when I was 15," wrote Quintero, "but I was unable to function sexually."

Planning to become a priest, he was educated at the LaSalle Catholic High School in Panama City, but when he graduated in 1943 with barely average grades he was best known for his ability to decorate altars and his devotion to Bette Davis movies. He entered the University of Southern California as a medical student, but after receiving a letter from his father saying, "I once had a son whose name was the same as the one you bear, but as far as I am concerned, he is dead", he felt he no longer had to please his family.

Seeing a touring version of Emlyn Williams's *The Corn Is Green*, which he attended every night of its two-week run, awakened an interest in theatre, and he enrolled at the Goodman Theatre Dramatic School in Chicago. A year later, with a group of drama students, he established a repertory company, the Loft Players, in Woodstock, New York, where plays directed by Quintero included *The Glass Menagerie* and Synge's *Riders to the Sea*. In 1950 the group moved to New York City and on their small profits converted an unused former night-club, the Greenwich Village Inn, into a theatre in the round which they called the Circle-in-the-Square Theatre.

Their first season's plays included *Dark of the Moon*, *The Enchanted* and *Yerma*, then in 1952 came *Summer and Smoke*, which established both off-Broadway and Quintero. "Quintero's success ignited footlights all over the Village," reported *The New York Times*:

Quintero: 'Silence is as eloquent as words' *Hulton Getty*

"The American theatre expanded some 40 blocks. Critics realised they would not fall into the Atlantic if they ventured south of Times Square." Quintero himself was to write in his autobiography *If You Don't Dance, They Beat You* (1972),

> The day after *Summer and Smoke* opened, we became a success. I had never known what success was, but somehow in the United States things happen overnight. They give you no time for preparation. Let me state here and now that success is a curse. It has a way of devouring any future inventiveness that one possesses. One breathes fear of change. It impregnates you with a formula in order to give birth to nothing. I believe that now, but then at 26 and having changed overnight from unwanted to the most desired, it is the ever longed-for and seldom achieved sensation of complete happiness. I was encouraged by the long line of people outside the box-office, looking as if they did not get a ticket to see the marvel of my work, they would faint with disappointment.

Quintero almost single-handedly revived the neglected Eugene O'Neill. 'Part of my soul,' he said, 'belongs to O'Neill'

Summer and Smoke had many of the qualities which would become trademarks of Quintero's direction, notably his dextrous manipulation of pauses and silence. "I do not like a fast-paced show," he said. "I prefer subtlety and atmosphere. And particularly silences. Silence is as eloquent as words."

One of his influences had been Jean Delannoy's film version of *La Symphonie Pastorale*:

> I stayed to see it three times until the movie house closed. And all that I know about direction came from that movie. When you direct, you're after that shy, inner thing hidden in the woods of your being. But it is not technique that I was ever searching for, but rather the treasure of the blind heart.

Truman Capote's *The Grass Harp* was among other well-received productions directed by Quintero before his landmark staging of *The Iceman Cometh* in 1956. Eugene O'Neill, winner of four Pulitzer Prizes and the only American dramatist to receive a Nobel Prize, had been lauded as the country's finest playwright but by the time of his death in 1953 his reputation had faded and critics were calling his work dated. Quintero's revival of *Iceman*, nearly five hours long with a shattering central performance (his first major success) by Jason Robards, drastically changed that view ("a major production of a major theatre work", wrote Atkinson), and six months later on Broadway Quintero staged the American premiere of *Long Day's Journey Into Night* starring Robards, Fredric March and Florence Eldridge, which won both the Pulitzer Prize and the Drama Critics Circle Award. Atkinson said, "It restores the drama to literature and the theatre to art."

Quintero formed a close bond with O'Neill's widow Carlotta, who had entrusted the much-coveted posthumous play to him, and for many years wore her wedding ring, which she gave him as a gift. "Quintero seems possessed by O'Neill's spirit," wrote *The New York Times*, while O'Neill's biographer Barbara Gelb wrote, "He has O'Neill's haunted, penetrating eyes. When his demons converged, he hid, like O'Neill, in the bottle."

Quintero's later directorial work included *Children of Darkness* (1958), which advanced the careers of George C. Scott and Colleen Dewhurst, and for the Metropolitan Opera House a double bill of *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *I Pagliacci* (1958). Other lauded productions included Thornton Wilder's *Our Town* (1959) – Wilder attended rehearsals and, like Tennessee Williams, became a close friend of the director – Genet's *The Balcony* (1960), Williams's *Camino Real* (1960), and many works of O'Neill, including *Strange Interlude* (1963) for the Actor's Studio with a cast including Geraldine Page, Ben Gazzara, Franchot Tone and Jane Fonda, *More Stately Mansions* (1967) with Ingrid Bergman, *A Moon for the Misbegotten* (1973) with Robards and Dewhurst for which he won the Tony Award as Best Director, Anna Christie (1977) with Liv Ullman, and *A Touch of the Poet* (1977) with Robards and Geraldine Fitzgerald. In 1988 Robards and Dewhurst appeared in a revival of *Long Day's Journey Into Night* to mark the centenary of O'Neill's birth.

Quintero made one film, an adaptation by Gavin Lambert of the Tennessee Williams novella *The Roman Spring of Mrs Stone* (1961). Featuring Vivien Leigh as an ageing widow who pays an Italian gigolo (a miscast Warren Beatty) to make love to her, it had some effective sequences and a biting performance by Lotte Lenya as a waspish procuress, but was not a success.

In 1980 Quintero directed Williams's last play, *Clothes for a Summer Hotel*, based on the relationship between F Scott and Zelda Fitzgerald, but it ran for only 14 performances. Its star, Geraldine Page, commented, "What made Jos a great director was that he would do everything by suggestion. He would give you the means without telling you what to do. His ideas were so human. So poetic."

In the mid-Seventies, when his drinking problem had become acute ("I used to fill little bottles and put them in my pockets and during rehearsals I would go away in the dark and drink them"), Quintero was aided in his fight against alcohol by Nicholas Tsacrios, an advertising executive, who became his longtime companion. In 1987, the director contracted throat cancer and had his larynx removed, assuming it would mean the end of his career. "I thought of O'Neill, in the last 10 years of his life, when he could no longer work because of the tremor in his hands. And he could not dictate and he could not write on a typewriter, so it meant the end of his life." But Quintero learned how to use a mechanical voice box and continued to work, also becoming a lecturer and university professor.

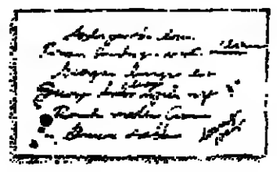
In August 1996 he directed two early one-act plays by O'Neill at the Provincetown Repertory Theatre on Cape Cod, where the plays were written. "Part of my soul," he said, "belongs to O'Neill."

Throughout his career, despite occasional work on Broadway and in London, where he staged *Long Day's Journey Into Night* in 1958, he remained true to his off-Broadway roots. "I wouldn't have been on Broadway if it hadn't been for off-Broadway," he said. Talking of some of the other founder members of the Circle who departed to earn more money, he commented,

> The theatre did not reward them to the degree that they wanted. But those of us who stubbornly stuck it out have enriched contemporary theatre by being willing to pledge heart, soul, mind, strength and loneliness to the sometime wickedness of that whore. It can kiss you and applaud you and at the same time break your heart. But there is nothing you can do about it. Nothing you want to do about it. You are in love. What else is there?

TOM VALLANCE

Jose Benjamin Quintero, theatre director: born Panama City 15 October 1924; died New York 26 February 1999.



LITERARY NOTES

PHILIP ZIEGLER

A hearty who took the wrong turning?

THROUGHOUT HIS life Osbert Sitwell found it hard to reconcile his pride in his aristocratic ancestry with his sincerely held conviction that the artist was the only truly superior being. His penalty was to be viewed with suspicion, if not mild contempt, by both his intellectual and his social peers.

"There are precious few Englishmen who could not assume a medieval name if they chose to pick about in their pedigree," wrote Evelyn Waugh of Osbert's pretensions to grandeur. The sneer was unjustified. Osbert's forebears had occupied their estates since the Cytewelles had acquired them in the 14th century, and, though the family's wealth had come largely from a 17th-century ironworks and 19th-century coalmines, their standing in Derbyshire society was unquestioned.

The real eminence, though, came on his mother's side. His maternal great-grandfather may have been (though probably wasn't) the son of the Prince Regent and Lady Conyngham; his mother's mother was definitely daughter of the Duke of Beaufort. "The blood of the Plantagenets flows in our veins," Edith Sitwell was wont to boast. Osbert was more restrained, but the knowledge nevertheless gave him great satisfaction.

Yet for Osbert this was not the only, or even the most important, element in his life. When the children of the local *noblesse* played together, the Sitwells remained uneasily aloof; conscious that they did not quite fit in but not understanding why. Only much later did Osbert conclude that he and his siblings stood alone because they were artists in embryo, "with nerves and brains created for the one purpose of a certain kind of sensitive perception".

As an explanation of their social isolation, this is hardly satisfactory. Many "artists in embryo" have contrived to mix happily with their contemporaries. A crippling compound of arrogance and shyness was more to blame. But Osbert's belief that his distinction lay in his literary skills and sensibilities, and that humanity was divided into two categories, the artists and the others, was unshakeable. He looked down on the middle classes not primarily on social grounds but because he considered them incapable of artistic creation or even appreciation. The fact that the greater part of the writing and painting he most admired came from the very social class that he so despised was never allowed to disturb this bland awareness of his own superiority.

In his West End clubs Osbert was a licensed jester, the tame house poet pointed out with mingled pride and derision. He met with some disapproval – the Prince of Wales was outraged when Osbert told him that he was abandoning the Brigade of Guards for literature – but, on the whole, tolerated. His efforts to shock bourgeois society were viewed as regrettable but less deleterious than drink or drugs; he was not a real rebel, judged his publisher, Harold Macmillan; rather, a radical Whig aristocrat who a hundred years before "would have fitted in among the young aristocrats in *Endymion*".

To his artistic friends, his seriousness of purpose was quite as suspect. He was deemed a literary playboy, a dilettante – a charge which infuriated him and which was belied by his productivity and the effort he put into drafting, and redrafting, everything he wrote. Virginia Woolf mocked his "extreme uneasiness, his childish vanity always striking the two notes: rank and genius". To Wyndham Lewis he was "a hearty who has taken the wrong turning – he has looked at pictures, he has listened to music too much, he has loved the Ballet not wisely but too well". His fellow writers respected his achievements but could never quite conceal their belief that he was not one of them.

Only in his autobiography, where he translated his ancestry into art, were the two halves of Osbert's nature successfully resolved. For the rest he was doomed to flit uneasily between two worlds: belonging to both, altogether at home in neither.

Philip Ziegler is the author of 'Osbert Sitwell' (Pimlico, 4 March, £14)

Acquitted defendant bears receiver's costs

WEDNESDAY LAW REPORT

3 MARCH 1999

Re Andrews

Court of Appeal (Lord Justice Hirst, Lord Justice Aldous and Lord Justice Ward) 25 February 1999

WHERE A receiver appointed under the Criminal Justice Act 1988 to receive and manage the property of a defendant incurred costs and expenses in so doing, those costs and expenses had to be borne by the defendant, notwithstanding that he had subsequently been acquitted and awarded the costs of his defence out of public funds.

The Court of Appeal dismissed the appellant's appeal against the dismissal of his application for an order that the costs of a receiver, appointed under the Criminal Justice Act 1988, should be borne by Customs and Excise following his acquittal on all criminal charges.

The appellant and his son were arrested by officers of Customs and Excise and charged with VAT and PAYE offences, to which Part VI of the Criminal Justice Act 1988 applied. The officers seized £42,305 which they found at the appellant's home. Customs and Excise then successfully applied *ex parte* in the High Court under sections 77 and 78 of the Act for restraint and charging orders against both father and son, and for the appointment of a receiver.

The appellant's son was duly convicted in the Crown Court, but the appellant was acquitted on all charges. He was allowed his costs to be paid out of central funds. On taxation, the costs of the High Court proceedings were held not to be covered by the award of costs in the Crown Court.

The appellant applied in the High Court proceedings for the discharge of all the orders against him, including the receivership order. When the appellant's property was released to him his solicitors realised that the remaining £10,011 of the amount which had been seized had not been returned.

The solicitors wrote to the receiver, who replied that there were no funds remaining to be returned to the appellant, all balances having been used to defray the prior costs of the receivership. The appellant applied for an order that his costs of the proceedings, inclusive of the fees, charges, disbursements, expenses and all other costs and remuneration of the receiver be paid by Customs and Excise. That application was dismissed and the appellant appealed.

Victor Joffe (Goldkorn Davis Matthias) for the appellant; Andrew Mitchell QC (Solicitor for Customs and Excise) for the respondent.

Lord Justice Ward said that in the present case there had been an agreement that Customs and Excise would indemnify the receiver if she were unable to bring in sufficient assets to meet her costs.

It was submitted for the appellant that, on a successful application for the discharge of a receivership order, costs should follow the success in that application, and that the remuneration and expenses of the receiver were part of those costs. Section 51(1) of the Supreme Court Act 1981 provided that "... the costs of and incidental to ... proceedings ... shall be in the discretion of the court".

However, the true position was that the investigation as to whether or not the defendant had suffered loss by reason of the receivership was an investigation which should and ordinarily would be conducted in deciding whether or not damages should be awarded for breach of the usual undertaking as to damages which a plaintiff would normally be required to give. In the present case no such undertaking had been given.

It was submitted for the respondent that section 89 of the Act provided a defendant with the only relief to which Parliament thought he was entitled. That section gave the court a discretion to order payment of compensation to a defendant who had been acquitted, but only where there had been some serious default on the part of a person concerned in the investigation or prosecution of the offence, and there had been no such default in the present case.

Furthermore, even if the expenses of the receivership were within the definition of costs, they were not costs "of and incidental to the proceedings". They had to lie where they fell.

KATE O'HANLON, Barrister

GAZETTE

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS

DEATHS

NUTTING: The Right Hon Sir Anthony, Bt PC. The funeral will be held at 3pm on Thursday 4 March at Holy Trinity Brompton, family and friends welcome. All enquiries to Leverton and Sons Ltd, 0171-387 6075.

RAHILLY: Peggy (nee Warren), beloved wife of Mick and mother of Christine, Angela, Patrick, Brian and Denis. Peacefully in her sleep on Sunday 28 February 1999. Funeral service at St Mary's Church, Westwood, Bradford-on-Avon, on Tuesday 9 March at 2.30pm. Donations please to the Stroke Association, Stroke House, Whitecross Street, London EC1Y 8JJ.

Announcements for BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS (Births, Adoptions, Marriages, Deaths, Memorial services, Wedding anniversaries, In memoriam) are charged at £6.50 a line (VAT extra).

BIRTHDAYS

Mr Ernest Bradbury, writer and broadcaster, 80; Mr Nicolas Dusan Bratza, High Court judge, 54; The Hon Peter Brooke MP, 65; Sir George Gardiner, former MP, 64; Mr David Glencross, former chief executive, ITC, 63; Dr Rod Hackney, past President, RIBA, 57; Mrs Joan Humble MP, 48; Mr Takashi Ishihara, counsellor, Nissan Motor Co, 87; Mr Martin Lovett, musician and teacher, 72; Mr Maurice Lynn, former Headmaster, The Oratory School, 48; Mrs Eleanor McLaughlin, former Lord Provost and Lord-Lieutenant of Edinburgh, 61; Air Vice-Marshal Charles Maughan, 76; Professor Neil Merritt, former Vice-Chancellor, Portsmouth University, 60; Mr James Miller, Headmaster, Royal Grammar School, Newcastle upon Tyne, 49; Mr Steve Morrison, chief executive, Granada Media Group, 52; Mr Peter O'Sullevan, racing commentator, 81; Sir Mark Prescott, racehorse trainer, 51; Miss Miranda Richardson, 41; Mr Ronald Searle, artist and cartoonist, 79; Lord Templeman, a former Lord of Appeal in Ordinary, 79; Miss Fatima Whitbread, javelin thrower, 38; Mr Mike Wood MP, 53.

ANNIVERSARIES

Births: Alexander Graham Bell, inventor of the telephone, 1847; Sir Henry Joseph Wood, founder of the Promenade Concerts, 1869; Philip Edward Thomas, poet and critic, 1878; Jean Harlow (Harlean Carpenter), actress, 1911. Deaths: Giovanni Domenico Tiepolo, painter and engraver, 1804; Lou Costello (Louis Francis Cristillo), actor and comedian, 1959; Arthur Koestler, writer, 1983; Danny Kaye (Daniel David Karminsky), actor and entertainer, 1987. On this day: Bizet's *Carmen* was first performed at the Opéra Comique, Paris, 1875; the Turkish National Assembly abolished the Caliphate, and disestablished the Islamic religion, 1924. Today is the Feast Day of St Aelred of Rievaulx, St Anselm of Nonantola, St Arthelais, St Chef, St Cunegund, empress, St Emeterius, St Gervinus, Saints Marinus and Astyrius, St Non or Nonnita and St Winwaloe or Guenole.

LECTURES

Royal Society of Arts, London WC2: Dr D. Neil Martin, "Smell: can it be used to manipulate behaviour?", 6pm (0171-930 9286 for tickets). Gresham College, at Staple Inn Hall, London WC1: Professor Roger Penrose, "The Limits of Computation", 1pm.

LUNCHEONS

Australia & New Zealand Chamber of Commerce UK Mr Bob Hawke was the guest of honour and speaker at a business lunch held yesterday by the Australia & New Zealand Chamber of Commerce UK, at the Baltic Exchange, London EC3.

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

The Princess Royal visits Oracle Corporation UK's Headquarters at Oracle Parkway, Thames Valley Park, Reading, Berkshire; as President, the Princess Royal Trust for Carers, visits Reading and Central Berkshire Carers Centre "Support for Rural Carers" event at Theale Medical Centre, Theale, Berkshire, and the Kirby Room, St Luke's Church, Theale; opens Bradbury House, Berkshire Multiple Sclerosis Therapy Centre Limited's new Centre at August End, Reading; and, as President, Save the Children Fund, attends a Reception for Wessex Walks Volunteers at Buckingham Palace.

CHANGING OF THE GUARD

The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am.

Post Gazette announcements to the Gazette Editor, The Independent, telephone 0171-293 2012 (24-hour answering machine 0171-293 2011) or fax to 0171-293 2010. Please give a daytime telephone number.

WORDS

CHRISTOPHER HAWTREE

express, *v.*

NO SOONER had I bought a six-pack of apple-juice than I learned that I might have need of a bra – for myself. This is not transvestism, not even mere hypochondria. It is little reported that chemicals from the print upon cartons seeps into the liquid and creates female hormones (just as mogadon survives in the water system).

It is an unfortunate situation – and makes *express* becomes doubly useful. Bacon said, "among the wat'ry juices of fruit are all the fruits out of which drink is *expressed*; as the grape, and the apple".

Since then, the usage has been more specific, as in Carter and Dodds's *Dictionary of Midwifery*: "The patient should be taught how to *express* secretion from the nipple so that the milk may be able to flow freely later on."

The lost art of learning

The emphasis in education has returned to the three Rs. But will their rigid enforcement stifle creative learning? By Judith Judd

DUMB BRITANNIA
2. EDUCATION

In a world where *Neighbours*, *Sweet Valley High* and Tomb Raider are most teenagers' idea of culture, schools are embattled fortresses of civilisation. Far from desceoding into mindless modernity, teachers are fighting to keep afloat the notion that there is more to life than soap operas and shopping. And they are doing so more determinedly than at any time during the last 30 years. While society may be "dumbing down", schools are smartening up.

Think back to the Seventies and early Eighties. Those were the days before the national curriculum when fashionable staffroom catch phrase was "start where the child is at": in drama, that meant soaps; in music, pop; and in history, just round the corner. Educatioo had to be "relevant" or pupils would switch off. If they read, why worry too much about what they were reading?

The purveyors of this philosophy had a point – but they went too far. Teachers were free to teach what they liked, invent their own examinations – and mark them. Primary schools, freed from the constraints of the 11-plus exam, might do endless projects on the dinosaurs, or study the Romans three times over, without so much as a glance in the direction of the Tudors or the Industrial Revolution. Inspectors revealed in 1979 that only one in 10 primary schools had a decent science programme. For the rest it was all tadpoles and sticky buds.

Primary teachers could also take or leave music and art. At one end of the spectrum was a small number of schools that draped their walls in batik and majored in basketweaving, with a smattering of the three Rs in between. At the other were the many schools that concentrated too narrowly on English and maths.

The 1988 national curriculum was the biggest shock to the school system in 50 years. Primary schools were compelled by law to teach the subjects, including art and music, and secondaries had to do 10. Detailed programmes of study in each subject were laid down. There have been alterations since, and pupils are now able to drop some subjects at 14, but the basic framework remains intact.

Since then, the changes have all been in one direction. There is an approved list of classic authors for 14-to-16-year-olds (Chuck Berry did not make it). Take a look at English A-level texts in 1976 and compare them with those prescribed for GCSE in the year 2000. A descent from the sublime to the mediocre which makes you long for a golden age. Far from it. The most remarkable feature of the lists is their similarity. Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* and Hardy's *The Mayor of Casterbridge* feature on both. The former has Chaucer and Conrad; the latter has Austen and Dickens. 1976 has Greene, Robert Bolt and Naipaul, whereas 2000 has Barstow, Golding and Susan Hill.

The idea that Shakespeare is not "relevant" has proved laughable. At 14, everyone must take a Shakespeare paper, legacy of the hapless John Patten, former secretary of state for education, who was ridiculed when he first proposed it. Last year, pupils performed better on this paper than any other. Shakespeare's lasting appeal must share at least some of the credit with Leonardo DiCaprio.

In history, empathy questions at GCSE ("imagine you are Harold's horse at the Battle of Hastings...") have gone, and facts are back in fashion. Perhaps there are fewer of them than before, but the quality of analysis demanded is much sharper than in the days of O-levels. Then, a mere recital of the facts, with only a limited understanding of the subject, would earn full marks. Under the new regime, grammar, spelling, punctuation and mental arithmetic all attract separate allocations of marks. Those syllabuses invented by teachers have been outlawed.

The oext change in the name of rigour will come at A-level. New rules will make study of pre-1770, as well as pre-1900 works of literature, compulsory. Mathematicians will have to learn specified formulae in order to answer universities' complaints that new students have oot covered the basics, and the use of calculators will be restricted. Modern linguists must all learn the same grammar.

In primary schools, thanks to the national curriculum, culture is now compulsory, rather than at the whim of the teacher. Every 10-year-old should have at least a nodding acquaintance with Picasso, Botticelli and Cézanne: they must study great painters, and try to paint in their style. They also have to listen to some of the great classical composers. Science, for the first time, is a serious propositioo for under-11s.

So the last decade has seeo steady progress in schools towards an ethos that refuses to accept that inner-city children have no need of Mozart and that there is oo point in teaching teenagers about books which are not immediately "relevant" to their lives.

Alongside is a growing emphasis on reading and writing as the gateway to the rest of the curriculum. Primary educatioo is shifting away from the child-centred learning of the Sixties and Seventies towards more structured methods of teaching. Ministers have introduced a literacy hour and a numeracy hour with detailed guidance on how to teach them. For the first time since the demise of the 11-plus, there is a national test for 11-year-olds. There are also national tests at five, seven and 14; today's pupils are the most tested generation ever.

Yet, just as the effect of reform is beginning to make itself felt, ministers have begun to send out some worrying signals. About a year ago David Blunkett, the Secretary of State for Education, announced that primary schools would no longer have to follow programmes of study in subjects such as history, music and art. They would still have to teach them, but the details and amount of time would be left to schools. The aim was to allow teachers to concentrate oo literacy and oumeracy so that ambitious government targets would be met. Mr Blunkett protested his belief in a broad curriculum, but it sounded suspiciously like goodbye to Cézanne and the Tudors.

The preseot situation may change. A oew versioo of the curriculum, to begin next year, is being drawn up by government advisers and some details may be restored. If they are not, the balance of the classroom will swing dangerously towards the utilitarian. Teachers are already under fierce pressure to raise standards in the three Rs. Only a brave headteacher will be prepared to sacrifice the targets to widen pupils' aesthetic horizons.

There's a similar whiff of utilitarianism about proposals for older pupils: 14-to-16-year-olds are to be wooed away from truancy by offers of more vocational courses and one day a week in the workplace. The idea that it is pointless to teach drama, music and art to inner-city kids is defeatist. Remember Vic Ecclestone, the teacher who persuaded pupils on the deprived Hartcliffe estate in Bristol to take an interest in ballet, opera and cricket. He ran hugely popular after-school workshops in a range of activities and persuaded members of the Royal Ballet, Rambert Dance and Sadler's Wells to coach both boys and girls.

The biggest danger of dumbing down in schools comes oot from a diminished curriculum or trendy teachers, but from a government whose view of education is too narrow to encompass Mr Ecclestone.

TOMORROW IN *DUMB BRITANNIA*, THOMAS SUTCLIFFE ON TELEVISION TODAY; FRIDAY, BARNEY HOSKYNS ON POP CULTURE; SATURDAY, DAVID LISTER DRAWS CONCLUSIONS

After changes to the national curriculum, culture is now compulsory rather than at the whim of the individual teacher *Rui Xavier*

HOW DUMB ARE WE?

"I don't think that élitism is really a bad thing. I don't think that people are dumb – they're actually quite astute. What is dumb is what they've done to the educatioo system – Blunkett and that awful man with the silly haircut, who doo't want children to have fun any more... The idea that everyone is educated from the age of five to be some kind of middle-management salesperson is absolutely disastrous."
Sir John Mortimer, writer

"We are currently going through a period of artisanship... If people look at the diet of pop we have at the moment, while the cootent could be considered 'dumbed down', the form of the music that kids are listening to is of a very high quality indeed, and when these kids grow up, they in turn will demand this quality from their music.

"My objectioo to the phrase 'dumbing down' is that it implies there was some goldeo age of the past when everything was better, which I think is absolute bollocks...

"I think this Government has tried to appeal to popular culture and play oo the fact that Tony Blair once played guitar in a band and Peter Mandelson likes going to clubs. It all hopelessly back-

fired, but the important thing is that this Government has accepted the importance of popular culture, and those who consider themselves part of high culture are terribly upset by this."
Anthony Wilson, presenter, Granada TV, head of Factory Records

The speakers are contributing to a conference entitled Culture Wars, Dumbing Down, Wising Up? at the Riverside Studios, London W8, 5-7 March

Fifty years as prisoners of war

That a painting by Degas in the National Gallery may have been looted from a Jewish family by Nazis is front-page news. But what of Mr Kellerman's tie-pin, deposited for safekeeping before the War? Or Dr Goldberger's £344, 12s and 10d? Why have they never been returned? By Adam LeBor

The last POWs could soon be on their way home. They are held not in prison camps, but on the walls of some of the world's most prestigious art institutions: the artworks by masters old and new that were once looted by the Nazis and are now on public display.

A roll-call of suspect works at Britain's own National Gallery includes paintings by Picasso, Renoir, Degas, Van Dyck and Caravaggio. Gallery officials are to examine the provenance of more thao 100 paintings to see whether they were stolen by the Nazis. But even if some of the works turn out to be stolen property, there is no guarantee that they will be returned to their rightful owners. The gallery's director, Neil McGregor, has said: "In law we cannot transfer title. So we cannot give a painting back to an individual, but the individual may want compensation."

Mr McGregor's optimism that the National Gallery's collection will remain intact could be misplaced. Nazi loot, whether of gold bars or of artworks, is no longer a national issue but a global one, as the Swiss banks found to their cost after a final settlement of $1.25bn (£780m) with Jewish urganisations over Holocaust-era assets.

The spotlight is now on the National Gallery, but back in the summer of 1998 the international art world faced turmoil after 39 nations, led by the United States and including Britain, France and Germany, pledged to identify works of art looted by the Nazis from Holocaust victims, and compensate their heirs. If those nations follow through on their promises, collections could be disbanded and major institutions across the world could find themselves bereft of pieces they believed they legitimately owned.

"This is the last chapter of the Holocaust and both the Government and museums are taking this issue very seriously," says Janice Lopatkin, of the Loodon-based Holocaust Educational Trust. "Art stolen by the Nazis is dispersed all over the world, but if museums are forced to dismantle collections, then so be it."

The owners of these looted works of art were oot the only ones to lose heirlooms. The last anyone heard of Marck Kellerman was when he left London for Poland in 1939, some time before the outbreak of war. Mr Kellerman, a Czechoslovak citizen, applied for a visa at the Polish embassy, and left two pieces of jewellery with his agent io London. They were oever collected. His tie-pin and bracelet are all that remains of the millions of pounds' worth of assets deposited in British banks by Holocaust victims.

All efforts to trace Mr Kellerman's family, both in the former Czechoslovakia and in Israel, have proved unsuccessful. The British government would be "more than happy" to return the items if an heir were discovered, says Lord Archer of Sandwell, who is responsible for overseeing restitution for one of the most shameful episodes in Britain's post-war history: the post-war confiscation of monies deposited by Jews, mainly from Central and Eastern Europe, in British banks.

Above, Christophe Meili, who found and returned Jewish ledgers from the Holocaust era; right, 'After the Bath, Woman Drying Herself', by Degas
AP/ National Gallery

Funds deposited by Jews living in countries that came under Nazi rule helped make up the £367m worth of enemy assets that were frozen in Britain under the 1939 Trading With The Enemy Act. All assets handed over to the Custodian of Enemy Property immediately became the property of the British government. But once the war was over, many Holocaust survivors and the heirs of victims who tried to get their money back ran into a wall of obstruction. British civil servants refused to distinguish between assets deposited by Jews and non-Jews from Nazi-controlled countries, or to take into account that Holocaust survivors and heirs would not have the paperwork oecessary to reclaim their funds. Some funds were returned to Jewish claimants, hut the odds were stacked especially high against those Holocaust survivors who lived behind the Iron Curtain.

Jews, for example from Romania, who had entrusted British banks with their assets during the war, now found thatthey could not reclaim them, because the Romanian government owed Britain money.

As the scandal over the dormant Swiss accounts gathered momentum, the focus soon moved to other Western countries, even those such as Britain which had fought the Nazis. In January 1997, Christoph Meili, a security guard at Union Bank of Switzerland, saved unique historical bank records from destruction by smuggling them out to Jewish groups. Meili's actions made him a hero to Jewish organisations, but his countrymen responded to his actions with a campaign of threats and vilification. In April 1997, the Meilis fled Switzerland for the US, where they sought asylum after a series of death threats against themselves and their children. In August, the US Congress passed special legislation granting the Meili family residency in America.

In April 1998, the British Foreign Office published a report oo the treatment of enemy property during the Second World War. A website of more than 25,000 records of those whose property had been confiscated was launched (www.enemyproperty.gov.uk). The website itself offers an eerie, state-of-the-art link through computer technology to the oow-vanished past of Ceotral European Jewry. Many of the 25,000 names are of Jews who died in the Holocaust, or who have long since gone from the addresses at which they are listed. Here is Dr Leo Von Buday-Goldberger, who vanished when he was taken away by Soviet soldiers in 1945. Dr Goldberger had securities worth £344 12s 10d confiscated. And Mr Kalman Kostelitz, of Dorottya Street, Budapest. Mr Kostelitz had £1,006 11s 4d worth of assets seized. Mr Kostelitz returned to Hungary after the war, but failed to reclaim his assets. No matter that he had been in Bergen-Belsen.

As a Jew, Kalman Kostelitz was an enemy of the Hungarian Fascists and their Nazi allies. As a citizen of post-war Communist Hungary, he was deemed an enemy of Britain. As the holder of a foreign bank account in London, he would, if discovered, have heen an enemy of the Hungarian Communists. No wonder he never got his mooey back.

The monies ooce deposited by Holocaust survivors will oever be returned – they no longer exist. None of the original assets is still held by the British government – apart from Marck Kellermann's jewellery – as all have either been liquidated and used to pay British creditors, or returned to their owners. Now though, the heirs of those account holders, such as Kalman Kostelitz and Dr Leo voo Buday-Goldberger, can claim compensation. Last December, Peter Mandelson, then secretary of state for trade and industry, detailed the Government's plans to compensate Nazi victims and their heirs whose assets had been confiscated by the British government.

About £25m has been set aside to deal with claims, which will be paid at today's values. That sum is a starting-point; further funds may become available. The scheme should go some way towards closing what, in Mr Mandelson's words, was "not a glorious chapter in our history".

'Hitler's Secret Bankers: How Switzerland Profited From Nazi Genocide' is published by Simon and Schuster

هكذا من الاصل


Markus Lupfer


Paul Smith


Matthew Williamson

Photographs: Ben Elwes


Tanya Sarne for Ghost


Kosuke Tsumura


Joe Casely-Hayford


Roberto Menichetti for Burberrys


Hussein Chalayan


Clements Ribeiro


Alexander McQueen


Nicole Farhi


Tristan Webber


Shelley Fox

The raw and the buffed

Variety was the key at London Fashion Week. Young designers got the attention, but big names held their own. By Susannah Frankel


Sonja Nuttall

Last week's London collections were nothing if not diverse – from the young designer Robert Cary-Williams's second collection, a low-budget, raw-edged affair held in a tiny venue, to Burberrys' first appearance on the London catwalk – a super-slick, super-expensive show more reminiscent of the Milan runways than anything normally associated with our fashion capital.

The clothes themselves were equally disparate. Cary-Williams's designs are ripped, torn and tattered, romantic but deconstructed, and aimed at a fashion-literate and probably very small clientele. But Burberrys', now designed by Roberto Menichetti from the Jil Sander stable, was polished from start to finish, if in a highly derivative manner. Blink and you might have missed the odd flash of Burberrys check. Without it, this was, well, Jil Sander to tell the truth, from the luxury hi-tech fabrics to the three-buttoned jackets pulled very-slightly-too-tightly across the top of the chest. What the Burberrys customer is likely to make of it remains to be seen.

The two most accomplished shows of the week represented very different aesthetics, courtesy of Hussein Chalayan (hot tip for this year's British Designer of the Year) and Alexander McQueen.

For his show, Chalayan returned to his preoccupation with flight. The first outfit out, in gleaming white metal, had a red, flashing light at its hem and a panel that dropped down like the wings of a plane coming in to land. This was Chalayan's most sophisticated offering to date, apparently minimal but increasingly complex the closer you looked: fabric moulded into shape by intricate webs of seams; a crescent cut out of the back of a dress to reveal layer upon layer of the fabric that has constructed its perfectly pure silhouette.

McQueen follows a rather more dramatic and high-impact route. His larger-than-life snowstorm was filled with his most unashamedly pretty collection to date and will go down in fashion history as one of the most brilliantly imaginative, brilliantly orchestrated and brilliantly beautiful shows to be seen in London.

Much is made – quite rightly – of Britain's bright young design talent. The Jerwood prize-winner Shelley Fox took us to the East End for a quietly beautiful, conceptual collection; Markus Lupfer, formerly a design assistant at Clements Ribeiro, offered up a more obviously glamorous, highly coloured and cutely idiosyncratic debut. Both are names to watch. Tristan Webber's show this time round exercised rather more restraint than it has done in the past: a more controlled colour palette suited his accomplished cutting techniques far better. Matthew Williamson, too, continues to pull in the crowds. As a colourist he is unrivalled in London, and his hot pinks and reds contrasting with more neutral hues won't disappoint. It's all very west London; the requisite pashmina, for example, was here transformed into a skirt.

McQueen's larger-than-life snowstorm, filled with his most unashamedly pretty collection to date, will go down in history

Clements Ribeiro, too, will attract this type of customer, although the clothes are more complex. Tailoring looked super-chic: low-slung but still sharp. Dévoré sheath dresses were lovely, as was black tulle appliquéd with gold roses and worn over white, paying more than lip-service to the vintage good looks beloved of London girls, but with a modern feel.

The knitwear supremo Julien Macdonald held back from turning women into the proverbial Christmas tree this season, and the result was good to see. Joe Casely-Hayford turned out soft shapes in pretty colours, with a raw edge that looked very of-the-moment; dresses and skirts with the texture of teddy bears were adorable.

Sonja Nuttall, another great hope for the future, went down the arts-and-crafts route that is emerging as one of next autumn/winter's major trends. Crochet knits, appliqué, multi-tiered frills and bold prints were all suitably upbeat, complementing perfectly a largely pared-down silhouette. Here, as on other runways, burnt orange reigned supreme.

While our younger designers continue to attract the most attention, other more established names remain a force to be reckoned with. Nicole Farhi and Betty Jackson both sent out easy, relaxed clothes in super-soft fabrics that looked a pleasure to wear. Farhi's emerald velvet was especially desirable – velvet also cropped up on the catwalks of Elspeth Gibson and Clements Ribeiro – and Jackson's subdued but lovely colour palette (sage green, smoky blue, deep red and dusty rose), subtle textures and fluid silhouette were good to see.

Jasper Conran's collection was more minimal that it has been – very cool in soft leather, matt jersey and heavy satin. Also a first was a pretty new neckline: a wide funnel that stood away from the skin, giving the illusion of slenderness and length.

Paul Smith, showing his womenswear in London for only the third time, is looking increasingly confident. Argyll knits, masculine trouser suits and tulip-shaped shift dresses were particularly appealing, put together in that very English way that Smith understands well; models looked like kooky aristocrats strolling round the Basil Street Hotel.

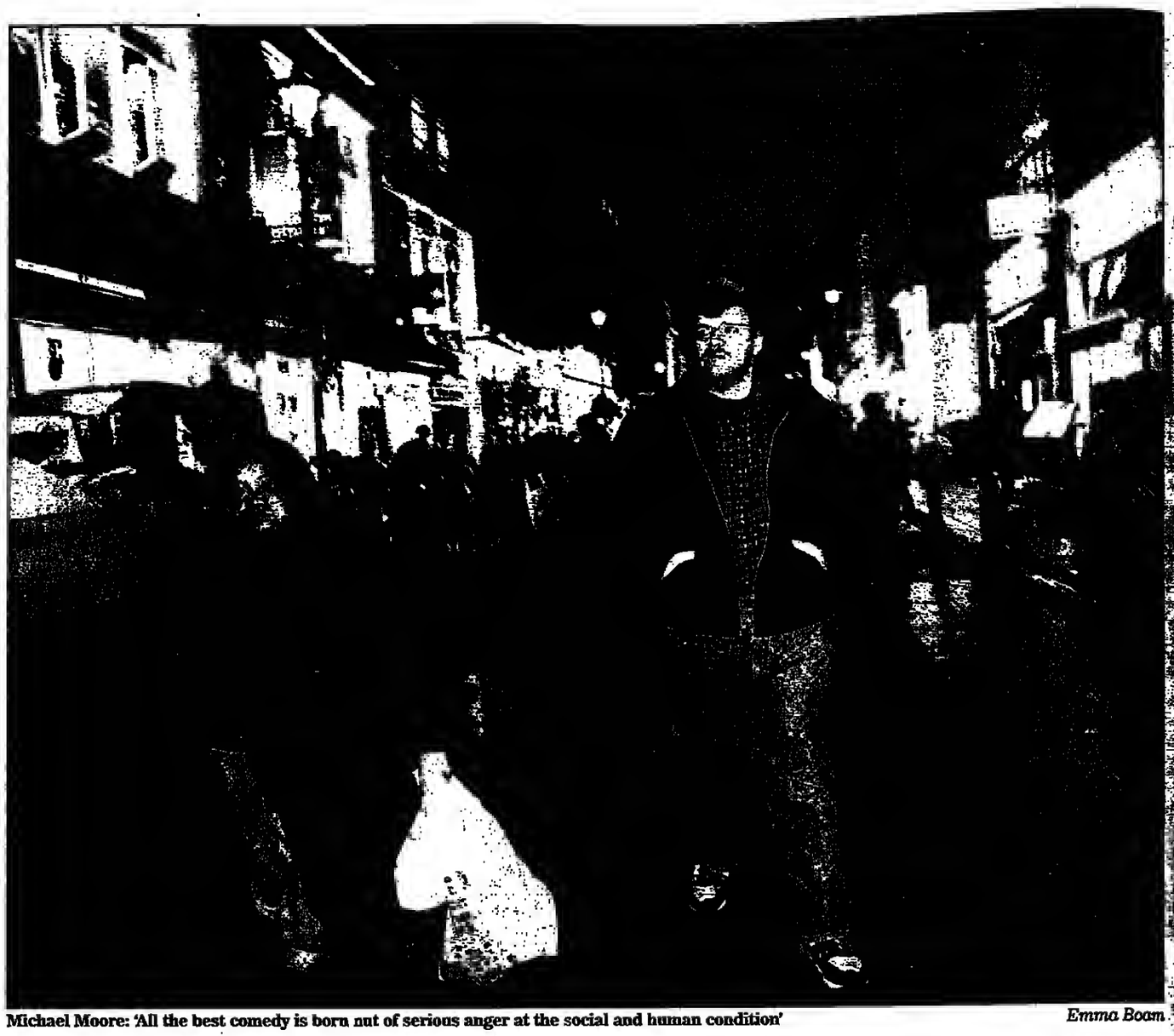
Tanya Sarne's Ghost label continues to go from strength to strength. The collection, inspired, as last season, by Victoriana, looked less overtly pretty and more modern, without ever losing the signature style known and loved by women the world over.

Finally, the Japanese designer Kosuke Tsumura continues to honour us with his presence – it was great to see his soft-shouldered silhouette.


Robert Cary-Williams

Guys and dollars

With no more than wit, guile and a TV camera, Michael Moore defends working-class Joes against big US corporations. So why does he have time for Rupert Murdoch? By Mike Higgins



Michael Moore: 'All the best comedy is born out of serious anger at the social and human condition' *Emma Boam*

It's never enough for Michael Moore simply to fight the underdog's corner; the 43-year-old television satirist likes to run circles round the opposition. In the first show of his new Channel 4 series, *The Awful Truth*, the softly-spoken Moore champions a diabetes sufferer whose medical insurers have denied him the funds to go ahead with a life-or-death pancreas transplant. When the insurers refuse to back down, Moore and the claimant turn up at their headquarters and stage a rehearsal of his imminent funeral. Within a week the insurers lose their corporate bottle and capitulate.

"I really think that humour can be an incredibly effective weapon to combat things that we think are wrong," he says. The same belief led to Moore's breakthrough film 10 years ago. In the late-Eighties, General Motors initiated a devastating series of plant closures in Moore's birthplace, the one-company town of Flint, Michigan. *Roger & Me* followed the former editor of the *Michigan Voice* in his pursuit of an explanation from Roger Smith, the chairman of GM. It was a David's-eye view of corporate Goliaths, as hilarious as it was incensed.(If anyone doubts Moore's influence, take a look at *Mork Thomas's Comedy Product* which follows *The Awful Truth* tonight.)

"All the best comedy is always borne out of serious anger at the social and human condition," notes Moore, tracing a genealogy of America's angriest comics: Lenny Bruce, Richard Pryor, Eddie Murphy. And the late Bill Hicks? "Oh, definitely Bill Hicks. That's somebody you guys know better than Americans do."

Moore, too, knows what it's like to be a satirist without honour in your own land. His last series, *TV Nation*, took up where *Roger & Me* had left off, irreverently wrenching stories from the stern grip of the hard-news media. In its ever-popular Corporate Executive Challenge, for instance, CEOs were called upon to carry out the most basic relevant task: for example, could the head of IBM format a floppy disk?

In 1995, Fox TV canned the Emmy award-winning show in America after just two seasons. Since then, Bravo, a cable channel reaching just a million homes, has proved the only channel gutsy enough to pick up his latest series. In Britain, meanwhile, the BBC (who had previously nabbed *TV Notion*) and Channel 4 went toe-to-toe for the rights to broadcast *The Awful Truth*.

The irony is not lost on Moore. "Every week I was on the air [with *TV Nation*] it was the No 1 rated programme in that time slot with that young adult male demographic that they want to sell Budweiser and MacDonald's to," explains Moore, mystified. "You see [commercial TV executives] aren't like us. We make our decisions based on how we feel, what we believe in politically. They have one overriding value: the bottom line."

Had Rupert Murdoch asked him to prove that *TV Nation's* 15 million weekly viewers weren't a fluke, though, he'd have jumped at the chance to go back to Fox. Hang on a minute: the people's champion cosying up with one of the world's biggest media moguls? He may not be back on Fox but he's signed a book deal with HarperCollins. "Even though Murdoch and I may disagree politically in terms of the issues, at his heart he's a populist. He likes the fact that he puts out television shows and newspapers that appeal to the working class. I would guess his British experience did not endear him any more to the élites that run this country." You don't need Moore to spell out his own dislike of unearned privilege.

His lumberjack shirt and trademark baseball cap is the uniform of America's honest-to-goodness heartland, a heritage he's proud of. "It's very rare, you know, that any of us get on TV. We don't get TV shows, the working class." And even though Moore now lives in sophisticated New York, he misses Michigan's blue-collar progressiveness. He says of New York: "I'd never lived in a city with a Republican Mayor, a Republican governor; a state that has the death penalty; a city where the cops have killed 100 people since Giuliani became Mayor."

Flint, on the other hand, was the first city to elect a black mayor. It even, claims Moore in a lengthy encomium of his home town, doubled the deposit earned on a soda bottle: "So you go up and down the highways of Michigan, there's no litter!"

Moore has just delivered the sort of earnest sermon he's careful never makes it on to his shows. "If you try to have a straight argument or discussion with [the big corporations], they'll have all their standard one-liners. So you kind of disarm them with their weakness – their inability to laugh or have a sense of humour. It's like the difference between judo and karate – there's no way you're going to win with a karate chop to the neck of corporate America." It's a lesson Moore learnt early. At 16 he attacked a national business guild's racist membership policy in a speech contest sponsored by the very same guild. Moore took first prize and helped end the policy in question.

Two years later, he became the youngest person ever elected to political office in the United States, winning a seat on his local Education Board while still at school and eventually getting his old high school principal the sack. Today, Moore says he's no political activist: "'Citizen' means 'a political activist'. But it's not something I want to do full-time – [*The Awful Truth*] is my contribution."

This time round, Moore is joined by more than a few standers-by in Manhattan, linking the packages instead before a sizeable, live, American audience. "I wanted the people at home to see that it's not just me and couple of crazy people in Times Square that believe in these things. It's like a big town meeting – 1,000 people in the room and they're all hooting and hollering and mixing it up. I like that."

Otherwise, *The Awful Truth* is business as usual, if a little edgier and more confrontational. Big business and bigots beware. "It's like *The Wizard of Oz* where everybody's afraid of the Wizard until Toto pulls back the curtain and reveals that he's just a frightened little man. Our show is kind of like Toto – pull the curtain back and show that these companies are not run by big bad wizards, they're actually just normal people. And some of them aren't too bright."

'Michael Moore: The Awful Truth', tonight, 10.30pm, Channel 4

Straight from the horse's mouth

CLASSICAL
LAHTI SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
SYMPHONY HALL
BIRMINGHAM

SIX ENCORES in two evenings is not bad going. And when last of these (chasing a melting *Valse Triste*) was the whole of *Finlandia*, you get some idea of the quality and scale of last weekend's enthusiastically received events in Birmingham.

This was Sibelius straight from the horse's mouth. No orchestra has received greater accolades recently for charting Sibelius than the Lahti Symphony Orchestra under Osmo Vanska. In particular, the Lahti has taken a fresh look at earlier versions of those scores about which Sibelius, a feverish reviser, had second, or sometimes third, thoughts – the Violin Concerto, the Fifth Symphony, *En Saga* – plus a clutch of his neglected scores from the 1890s, notably the tone poem *The Wood Nymph*, all of which featured in what amounted to a two-day residency by this orchestra, making its British début at Symphony Hall.

Just how do Finland's *conservatoires* generate such polished performers? Not just the sectional playing, but subsections too, produce playing of exciting precision. Vanska's strings have extraordinary range: they can deliver a savage, rasping tone where called for, yet their pianissimos are so refined as to be barely audible.

The Wood Nymph, which followed Sibelius's Bayreuth initiation, at times teeters perilously close to Valhalla's gates – like Wagner channelled through Smetana. Karelia bovers in the background – a later highlight is an exquisitely sensual extended cello solo, ushered in by violas. The closing pages, however, feature the sort of thin rhetoric to which Sibelius soon applied the scissors. It was the rhetoric of virtuosity that be sought to escape by excising some attractive platitudinous interludes and cadenza material from the much-tautened Violin Concerto. Vanska approached the rugged first version refreshingly with no hint of languid sentiment. What emerged, with award-winning Leonidas Kavakos as soloist, was satisfying: less silken, more rugged.

Especially magical was the slighter "Spring Song", whose glimpses of a *Finlandia*-like pathos drew lucid sectional playing in massed strings and brass that took the breath away, while from the less often heard Third Symphony, the Lahti drew pianissimos, part pizzicato, as mesmerisingly played as you will hear anywhere, and some enchanted, *Ländler*ish pirouetting from lightly vibratoed flute. The untrimmed, rather Rimskian prototype *En Saga* of 1892 holds up strikingly in its own right – uplifted here by impeccable brass playing, an exquisite sustained clarinet solo and wondrously nervy cello fade-out.

If intriguing extracts from the earlier, less chiselled four-movement version of the Fifth Symphony dominated the afternoon, it was Vanska's superbly controlled links and build-ups, in the evening's 1919 version – always with something held in reserve – that had me on the edge of my seat. The soprano Kirsi Tiihonen missed that edgy pathos that can make "Luonnotar" so melting, but brought appeal to two of the three preceding songs. The weekend's bonus was the young, all-female Tempera Quartet, Finnish students from the Royal College, who brought rhythmic verve and personality to the finale of Sibelius's "Voces Intimae" Quartet. Sheer joy.

RODERIC DUNNETT

The Lahti Symphony Orchestra's recordings of Sibelius are on BIS

Clueless but pretty with it

DANCE
DON JUAN
SADLER'S WELLS
LONDON

THERE CAN be few men able to roll their eyes more fetchingly than Irek Mukhamedov, or stroll more sinuously across the boards. So Don Juan would seem a natural role for him, and his enormous following of fans will doubtless enjoy every moment he is on stage in Kim Brandstrup's new ballet – which is almost all the time.

Whether the show does justice to its star or its subject is another matter. The full title is *The Return of Don Juan*, and it is supposed to be about the Devil sending Hell's most famous libertine back to earth to join a film studio where he must overcome the scruples of a girl whose virtue the arch-fiend finds offensive (what, only one in Juan's four centuries down below?).

Well, Juan blows it by getting all sentimental about the girl, and is only saved when Leporello, his servant, persuades her to pretend that she has succumbed. Not much of a plot, but you need the programme notes to understand it as Brandstrup has never been much good at telling stories. There were suggestions apropos of last week's *Midsummer Night's Dream* that Balanchine was not skilled in narrative, but his ballet was a model of lucidity compared with Brandstrup's.

I spent a long time wondering, for instance, how we were supposed to know that the heroine (Genevieve Byrne) was such a paragon of virtue, apart from her formally shaking hands with Juan. Then I realised that the clue was her friendship with a wimp who was all teeth and horn-rimmed glasses. Plausibility is not much in evidence here: can you believe film stars who get abandoned by crew and cast the moment their scene is over?

Anyway, the film set does allow the designer Craig Givens to provide, for one scene, some of the exceptionally pretty costumes on which Brandstrup's work has generally relied. For much of the time, though, the dancers are more drably apparelled, even in Hell, although Kenneth Tharp makes a personable Devil in his dark suit, red tie and trailing black tail.

As for the music, composed by Kim Helweg and played by a small ensemble under Matthew Rowe, its solid rhythms are not much more animated than Brandstrup's earlier electronic scores.

Irek Mukhamedov and Nanette Kincaid *Laurie Lewis*

So what does all this do for Mukhamedov? Well, it allows him to flutter his three-cornered hat and eyelashes, gaze meaningfully around when there's not much meaning about, and even occasionally dance a simple step or two. It might remind the Royal Ballet, who decided they didn't need or couldn't afford him, that he still has a heartthrob appeal not much seen in their programmes lately. Meanwhile, Covent Garden's loss is Brandstrup's gain – and bow.

JOHN PERCIVAL

Final show tonight, 0171-863 8000. A national tour includes the Wimbledon Theatre, 13-15 April, 0181-540 0632

The trouble with Robert Holman's plays is that they can't be pigeonholed. It's also their strength. And now, with a new play at the RSC and a West End revival, his work should find a wide audience at last. By **Paul Taylor**

Tales of the unexpected

He was a very quiet and honourable man, my dad, really," submits the playwright Robert Holman of his father, who spent the Second World War labouring on the land as a conscientious objector.

The Holman family has a long tradition of pacifism. Robert Holman's great-grandfather was sent to Strangeways for his beliefs during the Great War, but ironically at the time of the Second World War he was engaged in government-sponsored work, organising the reception in Manchester of the Jews fleeing from Poland. About 1,000 people turned up for his funeral.

Holman's father was also man enough to admit to his adult son that if the Nazi death camps had come to public attention earlier, be would have laid aside his principles and fought. Holman cannot now remember if this confession came before or as a result of *Making Noise Quietly*, his beautiful, elliptical triptych of plays about lives touched by war and violence.

First presented to great acclaim at the Bush in 1986, it is now revived in a poetic, heart-twistingly lovely touring production by Deborah Bruce for the Oxford Stage Company, and it is due to head into the West End for a six-week season at the Whitehall Theatre in April. The coincidence of this major revival and the current RSC transfer at The Pit of his disgracefully underrated latest play, *Bad Weather*, invites a reappraisal of a finely imaginative, toughly delicate body of work. It also prompts the observation that, like his father, Holman is a quiet and bonourable man.

This has not helped his media profile. Journalists find it easier to cope with schools and waves than with individuals who resist categorisation. That said, it is ironic that your first thought, on meeting this hard-to-pigeonhole playwright, is how peculiarly reminiscent be is of Alan Bennett. True, you feel you'd have to resort to chloroform to get him into a tie, cords and tweed jacket, and he is not a university wit, having chucked the charms of further education and subsidised his early writing career by working for three years in the bookstall on platform one at Paddington.

The resemblance is there, though, in the shy, wry humour. A tickled-sounding laugh bobs like a grace note over his conversation, the strong Yorkshire vowels seeming to date back to a generation earlier than his own. It is also present in the sense you get that, for all his superficially fey, boyish diffidence, be would, if irked on a point of principle, constitute a formidable one-man awkward squad.

An entry in Bennett's *Writing Home* leapt to mind while we were talking. Disgusted by the Falklands War, Bennett wrote, broodingly, "Not English. I feel now, this is just where I happen to have been put down. No country. No party. No Church. No voice. And now they are singing "Britannia Rules the Waves" outside Downing Street. It's the Last Night of the Proms erected into a policy." In the middle play in *Making Noise Quietly*, set during the Falklands War, a young naval lieutenant visits a woman to tell ber that the son she has not beard from for five years has been killed on the *Glamorgan*. The piece is a subtle study of how instinctive revulsion for a pointless war can be sidetracked by circumstances, and denied. The woman takes refuge from the deep pain of this death in snobbish gratification that the ghastly son had secretly married into the messenger's posh naval clan and to spare ber husband's feelings she ends np deciding, half-wilfully, half-unconsciously, to take an official *Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori* stand.

Given all this, and the mid-Eighties date of the original production, you might have thought it reasonable to assume that the Falklands had fomented this trilogy. But that would be to misunderstand the *ad hoc* routes inspiration takes with so instinctive a writer. That conflict was, in fact, the last piece to be fitted into the jigsaw.

Paradoxically, what unlocked the project for him wasn't any of the books about war be'd been avidly reading, but *The Journals of Denton Welch*, which cover the period 1942-84 and which, in 400 pages, mention the war only twice. Something of their bruised lyricism and homo-erotic subcurrents inform *Being Friends*, the first panel in Holman's triptych.

As an artist, be seems the antithesis of his exact contemporary Stephen Poliakoff, (born 1952), a writer-in-residence at the National Theatre at the same time as Holman, and who also happens to have a play in the current RSC season. Set in the BBC in the Thirties, Poliakoff's *Talk of the City* asks whether the mass radio audience was misled by a conspiracy of silence about the plight of the Jews in Germany. It is tremendously easy to convey what this play is about and to generate publicity for it because its ideas and its implied modern parallels are all that it amounts to.

But it would be a brave person who would attempt to give you an in-a-nutshell summary of *Bad Weather*, with its strange combination of repeated shocks and slow eventlessness, and Holman's characteristic density of subtext, which actors adore. Critics are busy people with deadlines, but plays like this need to live with you and grow less nebulous in the imagination. Hence the better immediate reception for Poliakoff's inferior play.

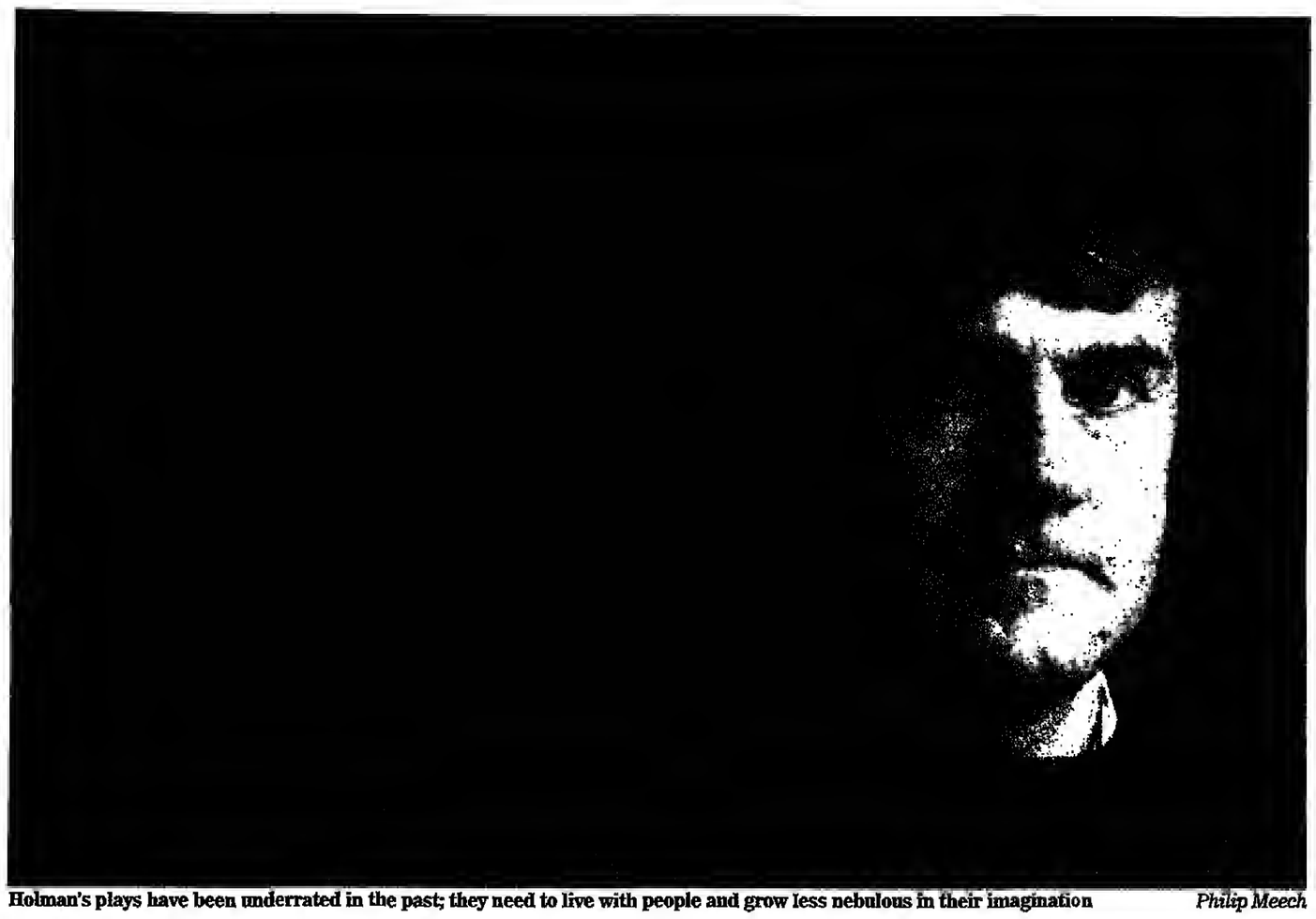
Bad Weather was triggered by a personal experience of being the one dissenting voice on a jury at the trial of some young men charged with grievous bodily harm – Holman's private letter to the judge wound up being handed round in court and used by the defence barristers in mitigation. This may have been what prompted it, but the play soon branches out from its social-realist Teesside starting-point. The characters are sent away for an idyllic, soul-searching, yet only jaggedly redeeming respite in rural France, rather as Holman's excellent 1991 play. *Rafts and Dreams*, dispatched a group of survivors from a global flood over the waters in a sawn-away living-room and asked whether, even with this radical opportunity to cut adrift from the tangles of the past, people would be able to make the requisite psychological leap.

There are certain recurring preoccupations in Holman's work. The psychology of taking the rap for someone else's crime, for example, is explored both in *Bad Weather* and in his splendid 1992 novel, *The Amish Landscape*, where a boy has to cover for his father's murder of his brother.

Offering unusual opportunities for child actors, the plays are correspondingly taxed by the question of what it means to be an adult, and by the way the truth presents a different face as yon grow older. Being an instinctive writer, be does not thank you for pointing out the pattern of emotional displacement in his work.

He tells me, though, that as with *Making Noise Quietly*, *Bad Weather* has expanded into a trilogy, broadly dealing with the theme of crime and punishment. When we met, Holman was unrepiningly pessimistic about the chances of the RSC staging this long work, after the non-tumultuous box office for *Bad Weather*. He seems to be that rare bird, a genuinely modest writer. The RSC should remember, though, that there is nothing modest about his achievement.

'Making Noise Quietly' is at the Traverse, Edinburgh (0131-228 1404) and at the Whitehall Theatre, London from next month; 'Bad Weather' is in rep at the Pit, London EC2 (0171-638 8891) to 13 March



Holman's plays have been underrated in the past; they need to live with people and grow less nebulous in their imagination *Philip Meech*

Nice and sleazy

REVIEW

THE IMPOSTOR
THE DRUM THEATRE
PLYMOUTH

PETE LAWSON'S *The Impostor* is a reworking of Molière's much-banned *Tartuffe*, substituting New Labour ducking and diving for the original attack on religious hypocrisy, and transporting the time and place from 17th-century France to present-day Bolton. Lawson's text is "all governments are sleazy", which he promotes by using Molière's original characters and relentless rhyming. Yes, it is a well-sustained attack on New Labour, the betrayal of transparent whiter-than-white for presentation forged in darkness.

The Impostor is a smart piece of work, clever in conception and execution under Jennie Darnell's direction, with smart, state-of-the-art decoration in Matthew Wright's painfully contemporary-shiny Home Office set. It's also smart enough to be able to update the dialogue to include references to impeachment, Clapham Common and large donations to political parties from self-interested businessmen.

In sticking to the original model, Lawson has lumbered himself with 10 characters, some of whom make only fleeting appearances and seem to detract from the main strands of the plot. The central character, Tartuffe, bears a strong resemblance to Peter Mandelson, or maybe an amalgam of discredited figures. Ann Widdecombe's famous description of Michael Howard – "There is something of the night about him" – is tossed in just to put us off the scent.

In terms of political satire, *The Impostor* hits its targets well enough. Yet the attack is hardly savage, more a sorrowful bead-shaking over such transgressions from an old and trusted friend. Or maybe It's just an acceptance of the fact that governments have unseen workings as well as the puppet strings that are on view. Acceptance is more dangerous than indignation.

The large cast – for a studio production – perform at a lick. Fred Ridgeway as Orgon, the archetypal northern businessman prepared to put down real brass to become mayor, becomes the more and more perplexed pivot of the farcical proceedings. Dermot Kerrigan's Tartuffe – a hypocrite right down to his underpants, prepared to justify anything unseemly in an insurance salesman's suit – carries off the self-righteous, sunny optimism of the character. In true political farce style he is caught, literally, with his pants down. Elmire, given the task of seducing Tartuffe in order to expose him, is played by Kim Thompson who bandles French farce at its trickiest. The ending is from the with-one-bound-Jack-was-free school, but the audience went away happy.

ALLEN SADLER

To 6 March (01752 267222)

DEBUT: DAVID CALDER

The Time: 1967
The Place: Bristol Old Vic
The part: A pirate in *Treasure Island*

MY FIRST job was at the Bristol Old Vic, then the country's leading repertory theatre. Quite early on, around Christmas time, when I was appearing in *Treasure Island*, my agent got me my first audition for a television job. They wanted to see me in London on a Wednesday morning, but I had to be back in time for a matinée in the afternoon. It was high adrenaline stuff and afterwards I was so preoccupied with how it had gone that instead of getting on the Bristol train, I got on the Cardiff train – which doesn't stop at Bristol.

My anxiety levels went up and up. I changed at Cardiff and managed to get back to Bristol, with a short time to get to Colston Hall before I had to be on stage. I grabbed a cab, and started to take my clothes off, much to the amazement of the cab driver. I rushed all the way up the stairs literally taking my shirt off and burst into the dressing-room, to find the pirates all dressed and ready to go. They completely got into the spirit of the thing, cheering me to the line to get out there on stage. I got into costume and

suddenly, as you do in these situations, time stops and you think you've made it. I thought I had enough time to put some make-up on. I grabbed the sponge and dabbed myself with it, leaving a complete ring of brown tan round my face. I was then thrown on stage.

Everyone turned, looked at me, saw this face and collapsed. The play couldn't continue – the laughter was unstoppable. The audience didn't know why these hairy pirates were being rather camp, falling about on stage. To pull ourselves back together, we had to go from being laughing pirates to being very angry ones, gritting our teeth and persevering.

Afterwards, Val May, the artistic director, told me in no uncertain terms about the discipline of theatre. It's hard in those situations to keep a straight face, but I managed to. If I'd laughed, I'd have been out on my ear. I've never had quite such an unfortunate experience since, but it happens to us all and when it does, it's beautifully humbling. Actors can get over-serious about what they do; there's nothing wrong with having a quick laugh at yourself.

INTERVIEW BY DOMINIC CAVENDISH

David Calder stars as Prospero in 'The Tempest', Barbican, London EC2 (0171-638 8891) to 4 Mar

What did you do in the past, daddy?

REVIEW

THREE DAYS OF RAIN
DONMAR WAREHOUSE
LONDON

KEEPING A diary, as Gwendolen remarks in *The Importance of Being Earnest*, is essential. "One should always have something sensational to read in the train." Most people's diary entries, however, degenerate to weather reports. When Walker (Colin Firth) discovers his late father's secret journal, be and his sister Nan (Elizabeth McGovern) are disappointed to see that the very first entry is shockingly bland: "Three days of rain".

For the siblings, this comes as something of an end, but for the playwright Richard Greenberg it is a cunningly constructed beginning. This, the last in the Donmar's American season, is an often fascinating study of the legacy of two architects whose family bome is a world-renowned landmark and the centre of an emotional whirlpool for their children.

The sibling rivalries of the well-layered characters are deftly establisbed as Nan meets up with neurotic Walker for the reading of the will. She's furious with him for having disappeared for months, leaving ber to deal with their father's death and their helplessly airy mother, wittily described as "Zelda Fitzgerald's less sane sister". Complicating matters is Pip (David Morrissey), son of Ned's partner Theo and former lover of the now-married Nan. Walker's realisation that he has been partially disinherited triggers old jealousies. Then, at the climax of the first act, be dramatically puts the lid on the past. "God damn you," cries Nan, "Now we'll never know anything."

Colin Firth, David Morrissey and Elizabeth McGovern in 'Three Days of Rain' *Geraint Lewis*

We, however, quickly learn much more as the second act cuts back to the time of the diary to reveal the unwritten truth. The same actors now play their parents, filling the stage with correspondences through the years. Pinter reversed the action in *Betrayal*, and Kaufman & Hart played a similar game in 1934 in *Merrily We Roll Along*, but Greenberg's twist cleverly explores the idea of the sins of the father.

The director, Robin Lefevre, coaxes witty, beautifully modulated performances from his cast, all of whom resist the temptation to signal too heavily what we know of their older selves. The rivalry between the men is captivatingly done and the climactic seduction scene is exquisitely played by a wonderfully gauche, stammering Firth – all spectacles and bunched shoulders – and febrile, skittish McGovern – a headstrong cross between a young Katharine Hepburn and early Blanche Dubois – yet even they cannot stave off the curiously flat denouement.

The gap between what we thought we knew and the literal truth widens throughout in the manner of a well-crafted thriller, but the play falls victim to its neatoess. Greenberg displays enviable talent, not least for piquant dialogue, but ultimately you're left feeling that the play is more contrived than emotionally resonant.

DAVID BENEDICT

To 13 Mar (0171-369 1732)

ON THE FRINGE

ZOYKA'S APARTMENT OLD RED LION ■ **THE GREEN SNAKE** RIVERSIDE STUDIOS ■ **BLUEBEARD** LITTLE ANGEL THEATRE

STALIN WENT to see Bulgakov's *The Day of The Turbins* 15 times, but it is unlikely that his ghost will bother to go to the production of *Zoyka's Apartment* at the Old Red Lion. The actors have taken a play encapsulating the febrile decadence and demonic pleasures of Twenties Russia. only to translate it into a series of bland walk-on parts.

This is tragic – not least because the play portrays a fascinating era in Russian politics. In 1921 Lenin reintroduced private enterprise to a country seething with economic discontent, which led to an explosion of blackmail and corruption. Against this backdrop, Bulgakov's aristocratic Madame Zoyka turns ber apartment into a dressmaker's shop by day and a brothel by night. The resulting grotesque fantasy world – a bustle of pimps, aristocratic wbores, opium dealers, and self-made bureaucrats – becomes a political statement about the depths to which the former ruling class sank in their desperation to escape to the West.

The play loses life through slack pacing and neurasthenic acting. You wish the characters were on speed rather than opium – and while Nina Field's Zoyka is delightfully disdainful, she lacks the dynamism needed for the creator of this ball of post-revolutionary horrors.

The other problem is the director's decision to stick to naturalism rather than playing up artificial elements in Bulgakov's wonderful script. This is not a criticism that could be hurled at Michael Chase's direction of *The Green Snake*. The play fuses Goethe's myth of death and rebirth with the unfolding dramas of five individuals waiting for a train delayed by problems more intransigent than leaves on the line, their personal tales echoed in a mythical world portrayed by an eclectic collection of mask traditions, ranging from Greek tragedy through to Sicilian puppet theatre.

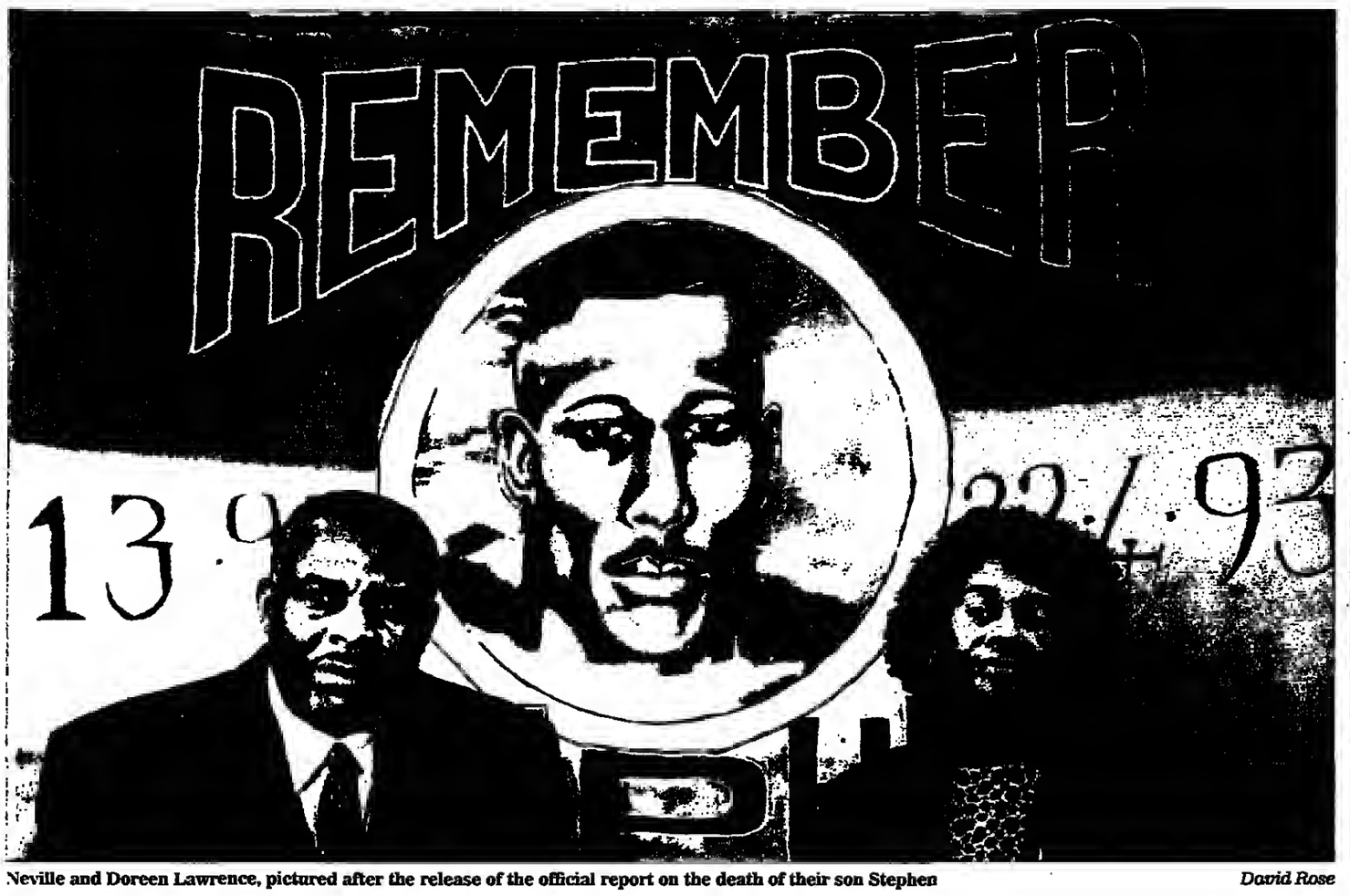
Pretentious programme notes aside, there are individual strengths. Adrian Williams-Brett's singing mythical ferryman provides a stylish bridge linking the real-life to the mystical scenes, while Philippa Williams-Brett brings touching comic conviction to her Noh-inspired babbling old lady, but a cardboard script for the real-life scenes and woefully choreographed movement scupper its intentions.

It does not begin to fall into the same league as Henk Schut's excellent adult puppet *Bluebeard*. This production picks up on the myth's tortured sexuality – as highlighted in Angela Carter's *The Bloody Chamber* – and manages to make wooden dolls and a bunch of rusty keys say more about fear and poisoned lust than many carefully crafted scripts.

The animators interchange masks and puppets in this intense and focused performance, frequently melding their own body movements with those of the dolls. Simple acts such as eating a melon or rolling a ball become charged with sinister symbolism. If you never thought a piece of wood could be sexual, catch the Little Angel Theatre on tour.

RACHEL HALLIBURTON

Old Red Lion, London EC1, (0171-837 7816) to 20 Mar; Riverside Studios, London W6 (0181-237 1111) to 13 Mar; Little Angel Theatre tour (0171-226 1787)



Neville and Doreen Lawrence, pictured after the release of the official report on the death of their son Stephen *David Rose*

I'm not afraid of change

I WORK FOR...

DELROSE LYSEIGHT IS PA TO SIR HERMAN OUSELEY, CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMISSION FOR RACIAL EQUALITY

I applied for this job at a time when I was still hoping to work in the Careers Service, but while I was studying the goalposts moved; the service was privatised and job vacancies became few and far between. However, my careers guidance studies as well as my English and IT degree stood me in good stead for this job, though I hesitated before accepting it. Having been freelance for some time, I wasn't sure whether I would fit into the office environment.

The ad didn't specify who I would be working for, so it was a surprise to learn that I would be PA to the chairman. The first time I met Herman I found him hard to read. I was trying to work out whether we would get on, and he was obviously doing the same. I felt puzzled about the exact nature of my role, although I now understand why it was hard for him to describe. When you are so busy focusing on the volume of the work you simply don't have time to look at the background mechanics.

When I started the job Herman was on leave and I was plunged straight in, without anyone to show me the ropes. I thought the pace would slow down on Herman's return, but he came back armed with work for me before rushing off to another conference. I felt comfortable with him early on: he obviously trusted me enough to feel I could deliver in his absence. I also gelled with my colleagues in the executive office; we share the same kind of personality and sense of humour. Despite our professionalism there's a kind of madness between us.

I answer a wide range of calls on the chairman's behalf; he's such a charismatic speaker that there is a constant demand for him to address employers and community organisations, including equal opportunity programmes and leadership challenge projects. He also gets invited to attend functions as varied as school assemblies and Downing Street receptions. When I'm not on the telephone I am busy with Herman's scheduling and ensuring that he's got briefings for his meetings, but when the phones are continually ringing the only way to catch up on paperwork is by staying on at work. Sometimes getting up at 6am and coming home at 7pm seems like a thankless task so this year I decided to take a different approach, starting with three weeks' leave in January to get a breather. But though things settled down in my absence, the phones started up again the moment I got back – I swear they were waiting for me. I have to stop myself from automatically saying "Chairman's office" when answering my phone at home.

Sir Herman: charismatic

The high profile of Herman's job means my job is pressurised. Unusually, callers get put straight through to me and there's a constant flow of reactions to what the chairman has said, both positive and negative. Our area of work is highly emotive. For example, when the findings of the Lawrence report were announced we had calls supporting us and others that were abusive and threatening. Last week a man harangued me, saying that it was black people who'd caused the problems and that the CRE was biased. I could have explained that the Lawrence report was in fact an independent report, or asked him if he couldn't identify with the suffering of a family whose son had been the victim of a crime. But this man could not distinguish between police bashing, and Doreen and Neville Lawrence wanting justice, as well as a means of understanding what their child died for. Some people seem to forget that the chairman is saying we need a just and fair society for everyone, rather than special rights for a particular group of people.

Discrimination is so hard to prove and I know that even when racism is staring you in the face you are likely to be told, if you try to complain to your boss or institution, that you have a chip on your shoulder.

The fact that we receive hate mail and bigoted calls just serves to underline why we need an organisation like the CRE. We also had a mass of calls and letters from people who identified with the experiences that the Lawrence family had suffered.

I think it must be a high to discover that you can have the power to influence for the greater good, but if Herman is excited he keeps it to himself. At the moment he is so busy that I rarely see him. Friends say to me, "I keep seeing your boss on TV" and I laugh and answer, "well, you've seen him more than me". I love the adrenaline rush that comes from a buzzing job with such a variety of interactions, but I am employed on a fixed-term contract which comes up for renewal shortly. I know that the jobs-for-life ethos doesn't exist and I've already taken risks and know myself to be flexible and adaptable.

With my background in careers guidance and my experience, ranging from self-employment to working for BT and the Probation Service, I'm not afraid of change.

INTERVIEW BY KATIE SAMPSON

The witch that hell sent back

THE TEMP

FOR SOME reason, they put me on to be the person who does the collection. Melanie Martineau is leaving on Friday, and I am responsible for her present. So I find a giant Jiffy bag in the recycling bin and set off round the office to get people to part with their hard-earned cash.

I start, naturally, with the people who sit nearest. Some sigh and grumble about the cost, but dig into their pockets and chuck in the odd heavy coin. The big boss finds a tenner. Within minutes, the bag weighs a satisfying amount and I'm feeling confident.

Get to finance. Stop beside a good-looking young man whose eyebrows look as if they've recently curled up for a good doze in the sun.

"Hello," I say. He looks up brightly.

"Hello," he says back, "What can I do for you?"

"I'm collecting for Melanie Martineau's leaving present."

"Leaving present?"

"She's leaving on Friday."

"No!" he leaps to his feet and rushes to the next-door desk, crying: "Paula! Paula! Guess what?" Paula looks up. "Melanie Martineau is leaving on Friday."

"What?" Paula's voice rises to a shriek.

"Yes!" He claps her about the shoulders and she, disconcertingly, shoots out of her chair and punches the air like a footballer who's just bought a new Ferrari.

"Yesss!" she shouts.

Suddenly, finance is in full-on party mode, and when hamster-brows comes back with a fistful of coins and throws them into the Jiffy bag with the words "There, see what you can get her with this", I accept it with pleasure and move on.

To the land where everyone's forgotten their purse. Eight people in a row say, "Sorry, I forgot to go to the cashpoint", or, "Can you come back? I don't know what I've done with my wallet."

Well, there's a tight-arse in every office. Some people just say they'd rather not, which is their prerogative, and another couple say that they're going to be bankrupted if they keep having to chip in for every leaving present, but drop in stuff that clinks.

Until I get to marketing, and meet Bob. Bob looks rather nice, in a bear-like, under-maintained sort of way. I approach him because he looks the most approachable, and watch the smile on his face replaced by something out of *The Exorcist*, as the words "Melanie Martineau" pass my lips.

"No, I would not," he growls, and hunches over his flow chart. Then he looks up at my retreating back and says: "What made you think I'd want to give anything to Melanie Martineau?"

I stop.

"Sorry. I'm a temp. I don't know about the relationships in this office."

"Mmm," says Bob, then apologises for being rude. "Tell me," he continues. "Have you had much luck?"

"Not bad, I think." I rattle my Jiffy in his face. Bob wrinkles his eyebrows.

"Well, I'm jiggered. How many people, roughly?"

"I suppose one in two."

Bob huffs. "Well, what a load of hypocrites. Tell me. Have you met Melanie yourself yet?"

"No. She seems to be out of the office all week."

"Well, that figures. Well, look, this isn't meant to be rude, but let me say one thing. I wouldn't give a present to Melanie Martineau if you held a gun to my head and threatened to blow my brains out, and I know that the majority of the people here feel the same way. Just a warning, in case anyone else reacts as strongly as me."

I don't care to ask why, but he tells me anyway. "Melanie Martineau," he says, "Is the witch from hell. Hell, in fact, sent her back."

I flunk out in marketing, apart from the department head, who slings in the smallest note she can find with a groan. They are the last stop on my route, and, despite this disheartening end, I return to my desk with weighty plunder and a light heart. I've always rather enjoyed the leaving-present thing; it's one of the few opportunities you get to spend a silly amount on flowers.

I tip my booty out on to the desk, to find that, including the tenner and the fiver, I have managed, from 100-odd staff, to collect £19.78 – mostly in 1p, 2p and 5p coins.

NEW FILMS

LOVED (15)
Director: Erin Dignam
Starring: Robin Wright Penn, William Hurt
Erin Dignam's *Loved* has been collecting dust on distributors' shelves for nearly two years now. Not because it's bad, one imagines, but because it's so subtly unclassifiable, so removed from the stock methods of tackling its volatile subject matter. Robin Wright Penn stars as an abused ex-girlfriend called upon by William Hurt's lawyer to testify against her brutal former boyfriend. Yet *Loved* deliberately evades the hectoring quality that fuels so many TV movies. Instead, it paints charged and troubled relationships for what they are: complex, personal and inextricably entwined.
West End: ABC Shaftesbury Avenue

PAINTED ANGELS (15)
Director: Jon Sanders
Starring: Kelly McGillis, Brenda Fricker
The angels are whores; the paint from the gloomier end of the palette. Jon Sanders' revisionist western revolves around a frontier brothel presided over by Brenda Fricker's no-nonsense madam. Earthy, naturalistic acting goes hand in hand with Gerald Packer's evocative visuals, though the downbeat handling makes it slow going at times.
West End: ABC Piccadilly, Renoir

PERDITA DURANGO (18)
Director: Alex De La Iglesia
Starring: Rosie Pérez, Javier Bardem
Alex De La Iglesia's quasi sequel to David Lynch's *Wild at Heart* is a strutting Tex-Mex caper, tequila-ed to the gills and running on a kind of posturing wackiness. Rosie Pérez acquits herself well as the vixenish heroine who abducts a pair of all-American virgins, while *Live Flesh*'s Javier Bardem simply glowers from beneath a comedy wig. It's camp, garish and annoyingly entertaining.
West End: Clapham Picture House, Metro, Odeon Camden Town, Virgin Haymarket

THE THIN RED LINE (15)
Director: Terrence Malick
Starring: Sean Penn, Nick Nolte
See The Independent Recommends, right.
West End: Odeon Leicester Square

TITANIC TOWN (15)
Director: Roger Michell
Starring: Julie Walters, Nuala O'Neill
All aboard for Troubles-hit Belfast, circa 1972. The IRA and British forces are taking potshots at each other. Civilians are dying in the crossfire. Julie Walters's local mum lobbies for a ceasefire and is caught between the opposing factions. Michell's fact-based fable is well-intentioned, but it's faintly lightweight, too. For a film implicitly about rage, waste and human passions, it's low on dramatic oomph.
West End: ABC Swiss Centre. Local: Kilburn Tricycle Cinema

URBAN LEGEND (18)
Director: Jamie Blanks
Starring: Jared Leto, Alicia Witt
As 1978's *Halloween* spawned a crop of shabby wannabes, so Wes Craven's *Scream* is siring its own breed of movie runts. Enter *Urban Legend*, Blanks's stalk-and-slash romp, which clones *Scream*'s tics, twists and in-jokes in much the same way that its campus killer mimics the crimes of popular myth. The result is strangely bland and inconsequential.
West End: UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End. And local cinemas

YOU'VE GOT MAIL (PG)
Director: Nora Ephron
Starring: Tom Hanks, Meg Ryan
Riffing off her earlier, more assured *Sleepless in Seattle*, Ephron ushers seasoned pros Hanks and Ryan through a contrived romantic-comedy that's zapped out of its old-fashioned rut by a shrewd Internet plot hook. Hanks and Ryan squabble in daily life and get all gooey on-line, resulting in a brew that is soft, sludgy and just slightly on the turn.
West End: ABC Tottenham Court Road, Barbican Screen, Clapham Picture House, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Screen on Baker Street, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Haymarket, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End. And local cinemas

Xan Brooks

THE INDEPENDENT RECOMMENDS

THE FIVE BEST FILMS

The Thin Red Line (15)
Terrence Malick returns to the screen after a 20-year absence with a hugely ambitious film about the battle of Guadalcanal. A war movie of a sort, though what that sort might be is uncertain.

Life is Beautiful (La Vita è Bella) (PG)

Roberto Benigni directs and stars in this tragicomic fable (*right*) about an Italian Jew who tries to shield his boy from the horrors of a Nazi concentration camp by pretending that it is an elaborate game.

Shakespeare in Love (15)
This enjoyable romp suggests how romance fired Shakespeare with the creative inspiration for *Romeo and Juliet*. Joseph Fiennes and Gwyneth Paltrow head a multi-star cast.

A Bug's Life (U)
Less sophisticated and more child-friendly than *Antz*, this animated feature spins an enjoyable yarn about an ant colony and its battle to survive. Kevin Spacey provides the voice of the chief grasshopper.

Affliction (15)
Paul Schrader's bleak study in fatherhood and fatalism, adapted from Russell Banks's novel, stars Nick Nolte as a man struggling to escape the influence of his violent dad (James Coburn).

ANTHONY QUINN

THE FIVE BEST PLAYS

Toast
(Royal Court at The Ambassador's, London)
So you thought that the comic fascination of a mass-production bakery in 1970s Hull was somewhat limited? Richard Bean's delightfully funny play proves you wrong. *To 6 Mar*

Copenhagen
(Duchess Theatre, London)
Michael Frayn's profound and haunting meditation on science, morality and the mysteries of human motivation. *To 7 Aug*

Oklahoma! (Lyceum Theatre, London)

Widely regarded as the best ever, this glorious production by Trevor Nunn (*right*) of the Rodgers and Hammerstein classic fully deserves its West End transfer. *To 26 Jun*

The Winter's Tale (RSC, Stratford)
An amazingly rich and complex performance from Antony Sher in Gregory Doran's Romanov-style production . *In rep to 4 Mar*

Hushabye Mountain
(Gardner Arts Centre, Brighton)
Dying of Aids and living with Aids: Jonathan Harvey's witty, sad and uneven new play looks at the disease in two eras. *To 6 Mar*

PAUL TAYLOR

THE FIVE BEST SHOWS

Monet in the 20th Century
(Royal Academy)
He lived until 1926. The gardens and lily ponds at Giverny dissolve into elemental visions: fiery lights, haze, liquid reflections, voids and depths. The strange last works of Impressionism. *To 18 Apr*

Portraits by Ingres
(National Gallery)

Some of the most intense portraiture ever (*right*). Women: exquisite *mélanges* of flesh and fabric, dreams of sex and money. *To 25 Apr*

Patrick Caulfield (Hayward Gallery)
The modern-object world made luminous. Caulfield is a virtuoso of many styles, and this retrospective offers the range – notably, those fat, laconic outlines flooded with translucent colour. *To 11 Apr*

Peter Doig & Udomsak Krisanamis
(Fruitmarket, Edinburgh)
Two painters collaborate. Doig's sizzling, curdling, overloaded landscapes mix with Krisanamis's collages of cultural detritus and noodles. *To 27 Mar*

Aubrey Beardsley
(Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool)
Drawings, prints and posters from the short and brilliant career of the 1890s aesthete and illustrator, with uniquely sinuous, florid line. *To 11 Apr*

TOM LUBBOCK

GENERAL RELEASE

AFFLICTION (15)
See The Independent Recommends, above. West End: ABC Shaftesbury Avenue, Chelsea Cinema, Renoir

ANTZ (PG)
If nothing else, this computer-animated trifle is surely the most unlikely Woody Allen movie we will ever see. *Repertory: Prince Charles. And local cinemas*

BUFFALO 66 (15)
As promising as it is, Vincent Gallo's film about an ex-con (played by himself) who kidnaps a dancer (Christina Ricci) in order to convince his parents that he is married, doesn't measure up to its influences. *West End: ABC Swiss Centre*

A BUG'S LIFE (U)
See The Independent Recommends, above. West End: ABC Tottenham Court Road, Clapham Picture House, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Mezzanine, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Plaza, Ritzy Cinema, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End. And local cinemas

BULWORTH (18)
Warren Beatty's satire is crude and condescending on occasion, yet genuinely audacious and committed, too. *West End: Odeon Kensington, Ritzy Cinema, Virgin Trocadero*

DON'T GO BREAKING MY HEART (PG)
This arthritic antique of a romantic weepie wheezes on towards a finale so predictable that you'd have to be dead not to see it coming. *West End: Odeon Kensington, Warner Village West End. And local cinemas*

ENEMY OF THE STATE (15)
Will Smith's fall-guy DA teams up with Gene Hackman's pensioned-off Pentagon warhorse, probes a political cover-up and gets embroiled in all manner of Big Brother-type trouble. *West End: Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Virgin Trocadero. And local cinemas*

HIDEOUS KINKY (15)
Through the teeming orange/red/turquoise backdrop of 1970s Morocco treads Kate Winslet's hippie single mum, her two daughters unwillingly in tow. Winslet does well with a change-of-pace role as the tale's permanently strung-out, unsated matriarch and the child stars are startlingly good. *West End: Curzon Soho, Curzon Minema, Odeon Swiss Cottage, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road. And local cinemas*

HILARY AND JACKIE (15)
Full-throttle playing from Rachel Griffiths and Emily Watson sustains Anand Tucker's warts-and-all biopic of the Du Pré sisters. *West End: Curzon Soho. And local cinemas*

HOLY MAN (PG)
Jeff Goldblum plays Ricky, a scuzzball TV executive. Fearful for his job, Ricky uses spiritual wanderer G (Eddie Murphy) as a frontman on his shopping show and sales go through the roof. G, in turn, teaches Ricky a few soulful lessons; you know, about life and stuff. Parts of *Holy Man* are very funny but the film never quite finds the right tone. *West End: Odeon Marble Arch, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End. And local cinemas*

HOW STELLA GOT HER GROOVE BACK (15)
Essentially this is *Shirley Valentine* with an Afro-American spin but Angela Bassett works hard to make an impression among the slide-show of tourist-brochure visuals. *West End: Ritzy Cinema, Virgin Trocadero. And local cinemas*

I THINK I DO (15)
Ah, the wedding caper. An excuse for reunions, for an ensemble cast, for the tensions of etiquette against emotion. Writer-director Brian Sloan ticks all the right boxes during this spry baby-boomer outing, and yet it's too hyperactive and ingratiating. *West End: ABC Swiss Centre*

JACK FROST (PG)
The respective trajectories of two stars meet in this out-of-season Yuletide caper. On the way down goes Michael Keaton as a self-obsessed blues-man who dies and is reincarnated as a snowman. And on the way up is *The Full Monty's* Mark Addy as his salt-of-the-earth best mate. Formula fun is had by all. *West End: UCI Whiteleys, Warner Village West End. And local cinemas*

LIFE IS BEAUTIFUL (LA VITA E BELLA) (PG)
See The Independent Recommends, above. West End: Clapham Picture House, Curzon Mayfair, Gate Notting Hill, Odeon Kensington, Ritzy Cinema, Screen on the Hill, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Haymarket. And local cinemas

LITTLE VOICE (15)
Holed up in her bedroom, timid North Country sparrow LV (Jane Horrocks) perfects strident Shirley Bassey/Judy Garland impersonations. Bracing black comedy. Horrocks's vocal pyrotechnics, plus a marvellously weighted turn from Michael Caine push it through to the final curtain. *West End: ABC Tottenham Court Road, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Odeon West End, Virgin Fulham Road. Repertory: Riverside Studios Cinema. And local cinemas*

THE OPPOSITE OF SEX (18)
Don Roos's harum-scarum trip through American gender politics leans heavily on a fire-cracker performance from Christina Ricci as the dastardly teen whose precocious antics send the adults (Martin Donovan, Lisa Kudrow) into a state. *West End: UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road, Warner Village West End. And local cinemas*

π (PI) (15)
What sustains π is the pure-blood ingenuity of its central conceit, its ongoing "mathematics is the language of nature" mantra and the louche, too-cool-for-school demeanour. It all adds up. *West End: ABC Panton Street*

PRACTICAL MAGIC (12)
Essentially a sibling soap-opera with a dash of mumbo-jumbo, *Practical Magic* sees Sandra Bullock and Nicole Kidman cast as two mismatched sisters raised from a line of witches. *West End: Warner Village West End*

SHAKESPEARE IN LOVE (15)
See The Independent Recommends, above. West End: ABC Tottenham Court Road, Clapham Picture House, Empire Leicester Square, Notting Hill Coronet, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Ritzy Cinema, Screen on Baker Street, Screen on the Green, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Trocadero. Repertory: Phoenix Cinema. And local cinemas

THIS YEAR'S LOVE (18)
A cast of Britain's finest (Kathy Burke, Ian Hart, Doug Henshall et al) weave to and fro through David Kane's Camden-set essay on urban romance. Kane's screenplay is generally witty and well-observed but the film cranks what might have been a sublime one-hour teleplay into double its natural length. Still, that's modern romance for you. You can't fit it into tidy boxes. *West End: Barbican Screen, Clapham Picture House, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Odeon West End, Ritzy Cinema, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea. And local cinemas*

CINEMA
WEST END

ABC PANTON STREET
(0870-902 0404) ⊖ Piccadilly Circus **Elizabeth** 2.15pm, 5.15pm, 8.15pm **Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels** 1.15pm, 3.40pm, 6.10pm, 8.35pm **My Name is Joe** 6.20pm, 8.40pm **π (PI)** 1.30pm, 3.35pm, 6.15pm, 8.45pm

ABC PICCADILLY
(0171-287 4322 (from 1pm) ⊖ Piccadilly Circus **Hamam: The Turkish Bath** 1.25pm, 6.15pm **Painted Angels** 1.10pm, 3.40pm, 6.05pm, 8.30pm **There's Something About Mary** 3.35pm, 8.20pm

ABC SHAFTESBURY AVENUE
(0870-902 0402) ⊖ Leicester Square/Tottenham Court Road **Affliction** 1.10pm, 3.40pm, 6.05pm, 8.30pm **Loved** 1.35pm, 4pm, 6.25pm, 8.50pm

ABC SWISS CENTRE
(0870-902 0403) ⊖ Leicester Square/Piccadilly Circus **Buffalo 66** 4pm, 8.40pm **Hotel du Nord** 1.40pm, 6.30pm **I Think I Do** 1.10pm, 3.10pm, 5.10pm, 7.10pm, 9.10pm **Titanic Town** 2.05pm, 4.25pm, 6.40pm, 8.55pm **La Vie Revée des Anges** 1.25pm, 3.45pm, 6.05pm, 8.25pm

ABC TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD
(0870-902 0414) ⊖ Tottenham Court Road **A Bug's Life** 1.20pm, 4.05pm, 6.45pm **Little Voice** 9pm **Shakespeare in Love** 1.10pm, 3.45pm, 6.30pm, 9.25pm **You've Got M@il** 1pm, 3.50pm, 6.30pm, 9.15pm

BARBICAN SCREEN
(0171-638 8891) ⊖ Barbican **This Year's Love** 6pm, 8.40pm **You've Got M@il** 6pm, 8.40pm

CHELSEA CINEMA
(0171-351 3742) ⊖ Sloane Square **Affliction** 1.35pm, 3.55pm, 6.20pm, 8.45pm

CLAPHAM PICTURE HOUSE
(0171-498 3323) ⊖ Clapham Common **A Bug's Life** 1.45pm, 4.10pm **La Vita è Bella** 6.40pm, 9.10pm **Perdita Durango** 9.30pm (+ Short: Grandpa) **Shakespeare in Love** 1.45pm, 4.15pm, 7pm **This Year's Love** 1.30pm, 4.20pm, 6.50pm, 9.10pm (+ Short: Tunnel of Love) **You've Got M@il** 1.15pm, 4pm, 6.30pm, 9pm

CURZON MAYFAIR
(0171-369 1720) ⊖ Green Park **La Vita è Bella** 1pm, 3.30pm, 6pm, 8.40pm

CURZON MINEMA
(0171-369 1723) ⊖ Hyde Park Corner/Knightsbridge **Hideous Kinky** 3pm, 5pm, 7pm, 9pm

CURZON SOHO
(0171-734 2255 (12noon-6pm) ⊖ Leicester Square/Tottenham Court Road **Hideous Kinky** 1.45pm, 4.15pm, 6.45pm, 9pm **Hilary and Jackie** 1.30pm, 4pm, 6.30pm, 9.15pm **Your Friends and Neighbors** 1.15pm, 3.15pm, 5.15pm, 7.15pm, 9.30pm

EMPIRE LEICESTER SQUARE
(0990-888990) ⊖ Leicester Square **Meet Joe Black** 12noon, 3.40pm, 7.20pm **The Prince of Egypt** 3.15pm, 6pm, 8.15pm **Shakespeare in Love** 12.15pm, 3pm, 5.50pm, 8.45pm

GATE NOTTING HILL
(0171-727 4043) ⊖ Notting Hill Gate **La Vita è Bella** 4.05pm, 6.30pm, 8.55pm **La Vie Revée des Anges** 1.50pm

METRO
(0171-734 1506) ⊖ Piccadilly Circus/Leicester Square **Perdita Durango** 3pm, 5pm, 7pm, 9pm **Your Friends and Neighbors** 2pm, 4.15pm, 6.30pm, 8.45pm

NOTTING HILL CORONET
(0171-727 6705) ⊖ Notting Hill Gate **Shakespeare in Love** 2.45pm, 5.45pm, 8.30pm

ODEON CAMDEN TOWN
(08705-050007) ⊖ Camden Town **A Bug's Life** 12noon, 2.20pm, 4.40pm, 6.50pm **Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas** 12.30pm, 3.05pm, 5.50pm, 8.25pm **Little Voice** 8.50pm **Perdita Durango** 12.20pm, 3pm, 5.40pm, 8.45pm **This Year's Love** 12.55pm, 3.25pm, 6.05pm, 9pm **You've Got M@il** 12.25pm, 3pm, 5.50pm, 8.35pm

ODEON HAYMARKET
(08705-050007) ⊖ Piccadilly Circus **Stepmom** 12.35pm, 3.10pm, 5.50pm, 8.30pm

ODEON KENSINGTON
(08705-050007) ⊖ High Street Kensington **A Bug's Life** 11.45am, 2.15pm, 4.45pm, 7.15pm, 9.45pm **Don't Go Breaking my Heart** 2.40pm, 5pm, 7.20pm, 9.40pm **La Vita è Bella** 1.40pm, 4.20pm, 7pm, 9.40pm **Shakespeare in Love** 12.30pm, 3.25pm, 6.20pm, 9.15pm **This Year's Love** 1.40pm, 4.20pm, 7pm, 9.40pm **You've Got M@il** 12.45pm, 3.40pm, 6.35pm, 9.30pm

ODEON LEICESTER SQUARE
(08705-050007) ⊖ Leicester Square **The Thin Red Line** 12.40pm, 4.10pm, 7.45pm

ODEON MARBLE ARCH
(08705-050007) ⊖ Marble Arch **A Bug's Life** 1.55pm, 4.20pm, 6.45pm, 9.10pm **Enemy of the State** 12.40pm, 3.25pm, 6.15pm, 9.05pm **Shakespeare in Love** 12.50pm, 3.35pm, 6.20pm, 9.10pm **This Year's Love** 1.25pm, 4pm, 6.40pm, 9.15pm **You've Got M@il** 12.45pm, 3.30pm, 6.10pm, 9pm

ODEON MEZZANINE
(08705-050007) ⊖ Leicester Square **A Bug's Life** 2.10pm, 4.20pm, 6.35pm, 8.40pm **Elizabeth** 12.35pm, 3.05pm, 5.35pm, 8.20pm **Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels** 1.25pm, 3.55pm, 6.20pm, 8.45pm **The Siege** 1.15pm, 3.40pm, 6.05pm, 8.30pm **There's Something About Mary** 12.45pm, 3.15pm, 5.45pm, 8.20pm

ODEON SWISS COTTAGE
(08705-050007) ⊖ Swiss Cottage **A Bug's Life** 12.15pm, 2.30pm, 4.45pm, 6.55pm **Hideous Kinky** 1.55pm, 4.05pm, 6.35pm, 8.55pm **Little Voice** 9pm **Shakespeare in Love** 12.10pm, 2.55pm, 5.40pm, 8.25pm **Stepmom** 1.20pm, 6.15pm **This Year's Love** 12.55pm, 3.25pm, 5.55pm, 8.35pm **Your Friends and Neighbors** 4pm, 8.55pm **You've Got M@il** 12.15pm, 2.45pm, 5.30pm, 8.15pm

ODEON WEST END
(08705-050007) ⊖ Leicester Square **Little Voice** 1.55pm, 4.10pm, 6.30pm, 8.55pm **This Year's Love** 1.15pm, 3.40pm, 6.15pm, 8.50pm

PEPSI IMAX CINEMA
(0171-494 4153) ⊖ Piccadilly Circus **Everest** 4.45pm, 9.05pm **L5 (IMAX)** 2.40pm, 7pm **T-Rex Back to the Cretaceous (3-D)** 1.35pm, 3.40pm, 5.45pm, 8pm, 10.05pm

PLAZA
(0990-888990) ⊖ Piccadilly Circus **Babe: Pig in the City** 12.40pm **A Bug's Life** 1.35pm, 4pm, 6.30pm, 9pm **Saving Private Ryan** 3pm, 7.30pm **Star Trek: Insurrection** 1.20pm, 3.40pm, 6pm, 8.30pm **The Truman Show** 1pm, 3.15pm, 6.15pm, 8.45pm

RENOIR
(0171-837 8402) ⊖ Russell Square **Affliction** 1.35pm, 3.55pm, 6.20pm, 8.45pm **Painted Angels** 1.50pm, 4.10pm, 6.35pm, 8.55pm

RITZY CINEMA
(0171-733 2229) BR/⊖ Brixton **A Bug's Life** 1.50pm, 4pm, 6.05pm, 8.10pm **Elizabeth** 2.20pm, 4.40pm **A Letter without Words/House of the World** 7pm **La Vita è Bella** 1.45pm, 4.15pm, 6.45pm, 9.15pm **Shakespeare in Love** 2pm, 4.25pm, 6.50pm, 9.25pm **This Year's Love** 2.15pm, 4.35pm, 6.55pm, 9.10pm **Windhorse** 9.15pm (+ Q & A).

SCREEN ON BAKER STREET
(0171-935 2772) ⊖ Baker Street **Shakespeare in Love** 3pm, 6pm, 8.30pm **You've Got M@il** 3.35pm, 6.10pm, 8.40pm

SCREEN ON THE GREEN
(0171-226 3520) ⊖ Angel **Shakespeare in Love** 3.35pm, 6.20pm, 9pm

SCREEN ON THE HILL
(0171-435 3366) ⊖ Belsize Park **La Vita è Bella** 2.15pm, 4.30pm, 6.50pm, 9.15pm

UCI WHITELEYS
(0990-888990) ⊖ Queensway **A Bug's Life** 1.40pm, 4.40pm, 7.10pm, 9.40pm **Hideous Kinky** 2.10pm, 4.30pm, 7pm, 9.30pm **La Vita è Bella** 12.10pm, 3pm, 5.50pm, 8.40pm **Madeline** 1.20pm **The Opposite of Sex** 9.55pm **The Prince of Egypt** 10.45am **Shakespeare in Love** 12.50pm, 3.40pm, 6.35pm, 9.20pm **Stepmom** 3.30pm, 6.45pm **This Year's Love** 1pm, 3.50pm, 6.20pm, 9.10pm **Urban Legend** 2.30pm, 4.50pm, 7.20pm, 9.40pm **You've Got M@il** 12.30pm, 3.20pm, 6.10pm, 9pm

VIRGIN CHELSEA
(0870-907 0710) ⊖ Sloane Square **A Bug's Life** 12.25pm, 2.35pm, 4.55pm, 7.10pm, 9.30pm **La Vita è Bella** 1.15pm, 3.45pm, 6.15pm, 9pm **This Year's Love** 1.45pm, 4.15pm, 7pm, 9.20pm **You've Got M@il** 12.30pm, 3.15pm, 6pm, 8.45pm

VIRGIN FULHAM ROAD
(0870-907 0711) ⊖ South Kensington **Hideous Kinky** 2.20pm, 4.40pm, 7pm, 9.20pm **Little Voice** 1.30pm, 3.40pm, 6.20pm, 8.30pm **The Opposite of Sex** 2pm, 4.10pm, 6.35pm, 8.50pm **Shakespeare in Love** 1pm, 3.30pm, 6.10pm, 8.55pm **Urban Legend** 2.10pm, 4.30pm, 7pm, 9.30pm **You've Got M@il** 1.15pm, 3.55pm, 6.30pm, 9.15pm

VIRGIN HAYMARKET
(0870-907 0712) ⊖ Piccadilly Circus **La Vita è Bella** 12.50pm, 3.20pm, 5.50pm, 8.25pm **Perdita Durango** 12.25pm, 3.05pm, 5.45pm, 8.30pm **You've Got M@il** 12.40pm, 3.15pm, 5.55pm, 8.45pm

VIRGIN TROCADERO
(0870-907 0716) ⊖ Piccadilly Circus **A Bug's Life** 12.50pm, 3.10pm, 5.40pm, 8.10pm **Bulworth** 1pm, 3.30pm **Enemy of the State** 12noon, 2.50pm, 5.40pm, 8.30pm **Holy Man** 1pm, 3.40pm, 6.20pm, 9pm **Shakespeare in Love** 12noon, 2.40pm, 5.30pm, 8.20pm **Urban Legend** 12.50pm, 3.30pm, 6.10pm, 8.40pm **You've Got M@il** 12.10pm, 2.50pm, 5.40pm, 8.50pm

WARNER VILLAGE WEST END
(0171-437 4343) ⊖ Leicester Square **A Bug's Life** 12.10pm, 2.30pm, 4.50pm, 7pm **Don't Go Breaking my Heart** 1.50pm, 4.20pm, 6.35pm, 8.50pm **Holy Man** 1.10pm, 3.50pm, 6.20pm, 9pm **Jack Frost** 11.50am, 2.05pm **The Opposite of Sex** 12.50pm, 3.30pm, 6.10pm, 8.40pm **Practical Magic** 1.30pm, 4.15pm, 6.55pm **Urban Legend** 11.55am, 2.10pm, 4.30pm, 6.50pm, 9.10pm **Very Bad Things** 1.40pm, 4.10pm, 6.40pm, 9.05pm **You've Got M@il** 12noon, 1pm, 2.50pm, 3.40pm, 5.40pm, 6.30pm, 8.30pm, 9.20pm, 9.35pm.

CINEMA
LONDON LOCALS

ACTON
PARK ROYAL WARNER VILLAGE (0181-896 0066) ⊖ Park Royal **A Bug's Life** 12.05pm, 1.10pm, 2.30pm, 3.30pm, 4.45pm, 5.50pm, 7.05pm, 8pm, 9.25pm **Don't Go Breaking my Heart** 6.35pm **Elizabeth** 7pm **Holy Man** 1.55pm, 4.35pm, 7.15pm, 9.45pm **How Stella Got her Groove Back** 9.55pm **Jack Frost** 2.05pm, 4.20pm **Madeline** 12.40pm, 2.45pm, 4.50pm **Shakespeare in Love** 1.15pm, 4.05pm, 6.45pm, 9.35pm **Stepmom** 8.45pm **This Year's Love** 12.15pm, 2.40pm, 4.55pm, 6.55pm, 9.05pm **Urban Legend** 2pm, 4.15pm, 6.35pm, 9.15pm **You've Got M@il** 12.10pm, 3.10pm, 5.50pm, 8.30pm

BARNET
ODEON (08705-050007) ⊖ High Barnet **A Bug's Life** 2.20pm, 4.50pm, 7pm, 9pm **The Land Girls** 12.30pm, 3.15pm, 6pm, 8.30pm **Shakespeare in Love** 1pm, 3.25pm, 6.20pm, 8.40pm **This Year's Love** 1.30pm, 3.45pm, 6.30pm, 9pm **You've Got M@il** 1.15pm, 3.45pm, 6.15pm, 8.45pm

BECKENHAM
ABC (0870-902 0412) BR: Beckenham Junction **A Bug's Life** 1pm, 3.45pm, 6.15pm **Little Voice** 8.50pm **Shakespeare in Love** 2pm, 5.40pm, 8.30pm **You've Got M@il** 1.45pm, 5.45pm, 8.35pm

BEXLEYHEATH
CINEWORLD (0181-303 1550) BR: Bexleyheath **A Bug's Life** 1.15pm, 2.05pm, 3.30pm, 4.15pm, 5.40pm, 6.50pm, 7.50pm, 9.50pm **Elizabeth** 4pm, 9.35pm **Enemy of the State** 9pm **Holy Man** 12.30pm, 3.05pm, 9.50pm **La Vita è Bella** 1.25pm, 4.05pm, 6.45pm, 9.25pm **Little Voice** 5.30pm, 7.35pm **Shakespeare in Love** 1.30pm, 4pm, 6.30pm, 9.10pm **Stepmom** 1.20pm, 6.45pm **This Year's Love** 2.10pm, 4.30pm, 7.20pm, 9.40pm **Urban Legend** 12.45pm, 2.55pm, 5.10pm, 7.25pm, 9.45pm **You've Got M@il** 1.30pm, 4.05pm, 6.50pm, 9.20pm

BROMLEY
ODEON (08705-050007) BR: Bromley North **A Bug's Life** 2.10pm, 4.35pm, 6.50pm, 9pm **Shakespeare in Love** 12.25pm, 3.05pm, 5.55pm, 8.40pm **This Year's Love** 1.25pm 4pm, 6.25pm, 8.50pm **You've Got M@il** 12.20pm, 3pm, 5.45pm, 8.30pm

CATFORD
ABC (0181-698 3306) BR: Catford **A Bug's Life** 6pm **Shakespeare in Love** 2.30pm, 8.20pm **You've Got M@il** 2.15pm, 5.15pm, 8.15pm

CROYDON
CLOCKTOWER (0181-253 1030) BR: West/East Croydon **Hilary and Jackie** 3.15pm, 5.50pm, 8.25pm

SAFARI (0181-688 3422) BR: West Croydon **A Bug's Life** 5.40pm, 8pm **Little Voice** 5.45pm, 8.10pm **Stepmom** 5.30pm, 8.15pm

WARNER VILLAGE (0181-680 8090) BR: East Croydon **A Bug's Life** 2.30pm, 3.40pm, 4.50pm, 6.10pm, 7.10pm, 8.30pm, 9.30pm **Elizabeth** 6pm **Holy Man** 7.20pm, 9.50pm **Jack Frost** 2.40pm, 5pm **Madeline** 3.50pm **Shakespeare in Love** 3.10pm, 5.50pm, 8.40pm **Stepmom** 8.50pm **This Year's Love** 2pm, 4.30pm, 7pm, 9.40pm **Urban Legend** 1.50pm, 4.10pm, 6.30pm, 9.05pm **You've Got M@il** 1.10pm, 4pm, 6.40pm, 9.20pm

DAGENHAM
WARNER VILLAGE (0181-592 2020) ⊖ Dagenham Heathway **A Bug's Life** 2pm, 2.40pm, 4.10pm, 4.50pm, 6.20pm, 7pm, 8.30pm, 9.10pm **Elizabeth** 7pm **Holy Man** 1.40pm, 4pm, 6.20pm, 8.40pm **Jack Frost** 2.40pm, 4.50pm **Little Voice** 9.20pm **Madeline** 2pm, 4pm **Shakespeare in Love** 2pm, 4.30pm, 7pm, 9.40pm **Stepmom** 6.10pm, 8.50pm **This Year's Love** 2.40pm, 5.10pm, 7.30pm, 9.50pm **Urban Legend** 3pm, 5.10pm, 7.20pm, 9.30pm **You've Got M@il** 1.40pm, 4.05pm, 6.30pm, 9pm

EALING
VIRGIN UXBRIDGE ROAD (0870-9070719) BR/⊖ Ealing Broadway **A Bug's Life** 2pm, 4.30pm, 6.55pm **Shakespeare in Love** 2.30pm, 5.20pm, 8.20pm **This Year's Love** 9.20pm **You've Got M@il** 2.20pm, 5.40pm, 8.50pm

EDGWARE
BELLE-VUE (0181-381 2556) ⊖ Edgware **A Bug's Life** 2.10pm, 4.15pm, 6.15pm **Daag** phone for times **Holy Man** 2.20pm, 5.20pm, 8.20pm **Kachche Dhaage** phone for times **Kuch Kuch Hota Hai** phone for times **Aa Ab Laut Chalen** phone for times **Zakhm** phone for times

EDMONTON
LEE VALLEY UCI 12 (0990-888990) ⊖ Tottenham Hale **Blade** 11.20pm **A Bug's Life** 1.40pm, 2.15pm, 3.05pm, 4pm, 4.45pm, 5.35pm, 6.20pm, 7.15pm, 8.15pm, 9pm **Don't Go Breaking my Heart** 5.50pm, 8.10pm, 10.30pm **Enemy of the State** 10.15pm **Holy Man** 7.25pm, 10.05pm **How Stella Got Her Groove Back** 6.40pm, 9.25pm **Jack Frost** 1.10pm, 3.40pm **Kachche Dhaage** 6pm **La Vita è Bella** 2.55pm, 5.45pm, 8.40pm **Little Voice** 9.35pm **Madeline** 2.45pm, 5pm **Shakespeare in Love** 1.05pm, 3.50pm, 6.50pm, 9.15pm **Stepmom** 3.30pm, 6.30pm, 9.55pm **This Year's Love** 3.20pm, 6.10pm, 8.50pm **Urban Legend** 2.35pm, 5.20pm, 7.40pm, 9.55pm **You've Got M@il** 1.20pm, 4.15pm, 7pm, 9.45pm

ELEPHANT AND CASTLE
CORONET (0171-703 4968) ⊖ Elephant & Castle **The Acid House** 3.45pm, 6.05pm, 8.25pm **A Bug's Life** 4pm, 6.30pm, 8.40pm **Hideous Kinky** 4.25pm, 6.30pm, 8.35pm

FELTHAM
CINEWORLD THE MOVIES (0181-867 0555) BR: Feltham **A Bug's Life** 11am, 1.10pm, 2.15pm, 3.20pm, 4.30pm, 5.30pm, 6.45pm, 9pm **Daag** 3.15pm, 7.40pm **Holy Man** 11.10am, 4.30pm, 7.05pm, 9.40pm **Hum Aapke Dil Mein Rehte Hain** 11.15am, 2.45pm, 6pm, 9.25pm **Kachche Dhaage** 11am, 2.40pm, 6.05pm, 9.30pm **Kaun** 1.30pm, 10.10pm **Aa Ab Laut Chalen** 11.10am, 2.35pm, 6.15pm, 9.45pm **La Vita è Bella** 1.10pm, 3.50pm, 6.35pm, 9.10pm **Little Voice** 12.30pm, 2.45pm, 5pm, 7.10pm, 9.20pm **Shakespeare in Love** 1pm, 3.45pm, 6.45pm, 9.20pm **Shahhed-E-Mohabbat** 12noon, 6.45pm **Stepmom** 11.15am, 2pm, 4.45pm, 7.30pm **This Year's Love** 11.30am, 1.45pm, 4pm, 6.30pm, 8.55pm **Urban Legend** 12.05pm, 2.25pm, 5pm, 7.20pm, 9.40pm **You've Got M@il** 11.10am, 1.50pm, 4.25pm, 7.10pm, 9.35pm **Zakhm** 11.40pm

FINCHLEY ROAD
WARNER VILLAGE (0171-604 3059) ⊖ Finchley Road **A Bug's Life** 1pm, 3.10pm, 5.55pm, 8.20pm **Don't Go Breaking my Heart** 2.10pm, 7.30pm **Holy Man** 1.50pm, 4.20pm, 6.50pm, 9.40pm **The Opposite of Sex** 12.40pm, 3pm, 5.20pm, 7.40pm, 10pm **Shakespeare in Love** 12.50pm, 3.40pm, 6.30pm, 9.20pm **Stepmom** 4.30pm, 9.50pm **This Year's Love** 1.10pm, 3.30pm, 6.05pm, 8.40pm **Urban Legend** 2.20pm, 4.40pm, 7.10pm, 9.30pm **You've Got M@il** 12.30pm, 3.20pm, 6.15pm, 9pm

GOLDERS GREEN
ABC (0181-455 1724) ⊖ Golders Green **You've Got M@il** 2.45pm, 5.30pm, 8.15pm

GREENWICH
CINEMA (0181-293 0101) BR: Greenwich **A Bug's Life** 4.45pm, 6.45pm **Shakespeare in Love** 8.40pm **This Year's Love** 4.10pm, 6.30pm, 8.50pm **You've Got M@il** 3.30pm, 6pm, 8.30pm, 11pm

HAMPSTEAD
ABC (0870-9020413) ⊖ Belsize Park **A Bug's Life** 4pm, 6.20pm **Shakespeare in Love** 2.35pm, 5.15pm, 8.15pm **This Year's Love** 1.25pm, 8.30pm **You've Got M@il** 2pm, 5.40pm, 8.20pm

HAMMERSMITH
VIRGIN (0870-9070718) ⊖ Ravenscourt Park/Hammersmith **A Bug's Life** 1.30pm, 4pm, 6.20pm **Shakespeare in Love** 12.50pm, 3.30pm, 6.10pm, 9.10pm **This Year's Love** 9pm **Urban Legend** 1pm, 3.40pm, 6pm, 8.30pm **You've Got M@il** 1pm, 3.40pm, 6.15pm, 8.50pm

HARROW
SAFARI CINEMA (0181-426 0303) ⊖ Harrow on the Hill/Harrow & Wealdstone **Doli Sajake Rakhna** 8.45pm **Hum Aapke Dil Mein Rehte Hain** 8.45pm

WARNER VILLAGE (0181-427 9009) ⊖ Harrow on the Hill **A Bug's Life** 11am, 12.30pm, 1.20pm, 3pm, 3.45pm, 5.50pm, 6.20pm, 8.30pm, 9.10pm **Elizabeth** 6.40pm **Holy Man** 12.40pm, 3.15pm **Jack Frost** 11.40am, 2pm, 4.20pm **La Vita è Bella** 6pm, 8.40pm **Madeline** 11.50am, 2.10pm, 4.40pm **Shakespeare in Love** 10.55am, 1.35pm, 4.15pm, 7pm, 9.50pm **Stepmom** 7.10pm, 9.40pm **This Year's Love** 1.30pm, 4.10pm, 6.50pm, 9.30pm **Urban Legend** 1.40pm, 4pm, 6.10pm, 9pm **Very Bad Things** 9.35pm **You've Got M@il** 12.20pm, 3.25pm, 6.30pm, 9.20pm

HOLLOWAY
ODEON (08705-050007) ⊖ Holloway Road/Archway **A Bug's Life** 12.05pm, 12.30pm, 1.05pm, 2.10pm, 2.40pm, 3.25pm, 4.15pm, 4.50pm, 5.45pm, 6.20pm, 6.50pm, 8.05pm **Holy Man** 1.15pm, 3.45pm, 6.15pm, 8.45pm **How Stella Got her Groove Back** 8.25pm **Little Voice** 8.55pm **Shakespeare in Love** 12.20pm, 3.05pm, 5.50pm, 8.35pm **This Year's Love** 1pm, 3.35pm, 6.10pm, 8.50pm **Urban Legend** 1.50pm, 4.10pm, 6.35pm, 9pm **You've Got M@il** 12.40pm, 3.20pm, 6pm, 8.40pm

ILFORD
ODEON (08705-050007) ⊖ Gants Hill **A Bug's Life** 2pm, 4.20pm, 6.40pm, 8.50pm **Little Voice** 4pm, 8.45pm **Shakespeare in Love** 2.50pm, 5.25pm, 8.10pm **This Year's Love** 2.55pm, 5.40pm, 8.35pm **You've Got M@il** 2.40pm, 5.30pm, 8.20pm

KILBURN
TRICYCLE CINEMA (0171-328 1000) ⊖ Kilburn **Titanic Town** 6.30pm, 8.45pm

KINGSTON
ABC OPTIONS (0870-9020409) BR: Kingston **A Bug's Life** 1.20pm, 3.40pm, 6.05pm **Little Voice** 8.30pm **Shakespeare in Love** 5.25pm, 8.10pm **You've Got M@il** 2.10pm, 5.30pm, 8.10pm

MUSWELL HILL
ODEON (08705-050007) ⊖ Highgate **A Bug's Life** 2.40pm, 4.50pm, 7pm, 9.05pm **This Year's Love** 2pm, 4.15pm, 6.30pm, 8.45pm **You've Got M@il** 1pm, 3.30pm, 6pm, 8.30pm

NORTH FINCHLEY
WARNER VILLAGE (0181-446 9344) ⊖ East Finchley/Finchley Central **A Bug's Life** 2.30pm, 4.40pm, 5.20pm, 7.40pm, 10pm **Elizabeth** 6.25pm **Holy Man** 6.20pm, 9pm **Jack Frost** 1.30pm, 4pm **La Vita è Bella** 2pm, 7pm, 9.45pm **Madeline** 1.50pm, 4.05pm **Shakespeare in Love** 1.10pm, 3.50pm, 6.50pm, 9.40pm **Stepmom** 9.20pm **This Year's Love** 1pm, 3.30pm, 6.10pm, 9.30pm **Urban Legend** 1.40pm, 4.10pm, 6.40pm, 9.10pm **You've Got M@il** 2.50pm, 6.30pm, 9.20pm

PECKHAM
PREMIER (0181-235 3006) BR: Peckham Rye **A Bug's Life** 4.40pm, 7pm, 9.20pm **Holy Man** 1.45pm, 4.15pm, 6.45pm, 9.25pm **How Stella Got her Groove Back** 6.20pm, 9.05pm **Madeline** 4.30pm **Shakespeare in Love** 4pm, 6.30pm, 9pm **This Year's Love** 4.20pm, 6.50pm, 9.15pm **You've Got M@il** 3.55pm, 6.35pm, 9.10pm

PURLEY
ABC (0870-9020407) BR: Purley **A Bug's Life** 6pm **Shakespeare in Love** 8.20pm **This Year's Love** 5.25pm, 8.25pm **You've Got M@il** 5pm, 8pm

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PUTNEY
ABC (0870-9020401) ⊖ Putney Bridge/BR: Putney A Bug's Life 4pm Little Voice 1.15pm, 6.30pm, 8.45pm Shakespeare In Love 2.15pm, 5.30pm, 8.15pm You've Got M@il 2.15pm, 5.15pm, 8.30pm

RICHMOND
ODEON)08705-050007) BR/⊖ Richmond A Bug's Life 2.30pm, 4.50pm, 7.10pm, 9.30pm Shakespeare in Love 12.30pm, 3.20pm, 6.30pm, 9.10pm You've Got M@il 1pm, 3.50pm, 6.30pm, 9.20pm

ODEON STUDIO)08705-050007) BR/⊖ Richmond Don't Go Breaking my Heart 1.30pm, 7pm Hilary and Jackie 3.40pm, 9pm Holy Man 3.20pm, 9.20pm Little Voice 7pm, 9.30pm Stepmom 12.50pm, 6pm This Year's Love 4.10pm, 6.40pm, 9.20pm

ROMFORD
ABC)0870-9020419) BR: Romford A Bug's Life 2.10pm, 4.15pm, 6.20pm Jack Frost 6pm Stepmom 8.25pm This Year's Love 2.15pm, 8.35pm You've Got M@il 2.25pm, 5.30pm, 8.10pm

ODEON LIBERTY 2 (08705-050007) BR: Romford A Bug's Life 12.15pm, 2pm, 2.30pm, 4.20pm, 4.45pm, 6.30pm, 7pm, 8.40pm Holy Man 12.45pm, 3.30pm, 6pm The Land Girls 12.45pm, 3.30pm, 6pm, 8.40pm Little Voice 9pm Shakespeare In Love 12.20pm, 3.10pm, 5.45pm, 8.20pm Stepmom 12.20pm, 3pm, 5.40pm, 8.20pm This Year's Love 1.30pm, 4.15pm, 6.30pm, 8.50pm Urban Legend 12.10pm, 2.20pm, 4.30pm, 6.40pm, 9pm You've Got M@il 12.30pm, 3.15pm, 5.45pm, 8.30pm

SIDCUP
ABC (0541-555131) BR: Sidcup A Bug's Life 6pm Shakespeare In Love 8.20pm You've Got M@il 5.15pm, 8.15pm

STAPLES CORNER
VIRGIN (0870-9070717(BR: Cricklewood A Bug's Life 1pm, 2.15pm, 3.30pm, 4.30pm, 6pm, 8.30pm Holy Man 6.45pm, 9.20pm Shakespeare In Love 12.30pm, 3.10pm, 5.50pm, 8.50pm This Year's Love 1.30pm, 4pm, 6.30pm, 9pm Urban Legend 2pm, 4.20pm, 6.45pm, 9.15pm You've Got M@il 1pm, 3.45pm, 6.20pm, 9pm

STREATHAM
ABC (0870-9020415) BR: Streatham Hill Hideous Kinky 2.10pm, 4.30pm, 6.50pm, 9pm Shakespeare In Love 2.25pm, 5.35pm, 8.25pm Stepmom 2.20pm, 5.25pm, 8.15pm

ODEON (08705-050007) BR: Streatham Hill A Bug's Life 2.30pm, 4.50pm, 7pm, 9pm Holy Man 12.30pm, 3.10pm 6.10pm, 8.40pm How Stella Got Her Groove Back 12.20pm, 3pm, 5.45pm, 8.25pm This Year's Love 1.30pm, 3.50pm, 6.20pm, 8.40pm You've Got M@il 12.40pm, 3.15pm, 5.50pm, 8.30pm

STRATFORD
NEW STRATFORD PICTURE HOUSE (0181-555 3366) BR/⊖ Stratford East A Bug's Life 2pm, 4.15pm, 6.45pm, 9.10pm La Vita è Bella 1.25pm, 3.55pm, 6.20pm, 8.50pm This Year's Love 1.30pm, 4pm, 6.30pm, 9pm You've Got M@il 1.15pm, 3.45pm, 6.15pm, 8.45pm

SURREY QUAYS
UCI (0990-888990) ⊖ Surrey Quays Antz 12.50pm A Bug's Life 1pm, 2pm, 3.20pm, 4.30pm, 6pm, 7.10pm, 8.30pm, 11pm Holy Man 3.30pm, 6.10pm, 8.50pm, 11.30pm How Stella Got her Groove Back 9.55pm Jack Frost 2.50pm, 5.10pm Little Voice 7.30pm Madeline 1.40pm, 4.20pm The Opposite of Sex 10.10pm The Prince of Egypt 1.10pm Shakespeare In Love 12.40pm, 3.40pm, 6.20pm, 9pm, 11.30pm Stepmom 6.35pm, 9.30pm This Year's Love 3.50pm, 6.30pm, 9.10pm, 11.50pm Urban Legend 2.40pm, 5pm, 7.20pm, 9.45pm You've Got M@il 1.30pm, 4.10pm, 6.50pm, 9.30pm, 11.55pm

SUTTON
UCI 6 (0990-888990) BR: Sutton/⊖ Morden A Bug's Life 1pm, 2pm, 3.30pm, 4.30pm, 6pm, 7pm, 8.30pm Enemy of the State 9pm Little Voice 9.30pm Madeline 12.45pm, 3.15pm Shakespeare in Love 1.15pm, 3.55pm, 6.35pm, 9.20pm Stepmom 6.25pm This Year's Love 4.45pm, 7.15pm, 9.55pm You've Got M@il 1.30pm, 4.10pm, 6.50pm, 9.40pm

TURNPIKE LANE
CORONET (0181-888 2519) ⊖ Turnpike Lane A Bug's Life 4pm, 6.30pm, 8.40pm This Year's Love 4.05pm, 6.20pm, 8.35pm You've Got M@il 3.30pm, 6pm, 8.25pm

UXBRIDGE
ODEON (08705-050007) ⊖ Uxbridge A Bug's Life 1.30pm, 4.15pm, 6.20pm Shakespeare In Love 8.25pm You've Got M@il 1.05pm, 3.30pm, 6pm, 8.30pm

WALTHAMSTOW
ABC (0870-9020424) ⊖ Walthamstow Central A Bug's Life 1.40pm, 3.50pm, 6pm Stepmom 8.10pm This Year's Love 1.25pm, 3.40pm, 6pm, 8.25pm You've Got M@il 1.55pm, 5.05pm, 8.10pm

WALTON ON THAMES
THE SCREEN AT WALTON (01932-252825) BR: Walton on Thames A Bug's Life 4.20pm Hilary and Jackie 3.30pm, 8.25pm Shakespeare in Love 6pm You've Got M@il 2pm, 6.15pm, 8.40pm

WELL HALL
CORONET (0181-850 3351) BR: Eltham A Bug's Life 4pm, 6.30pm, 8.40pm Stepmom 3.25pm, 5.50pm, 8.25pm

WILLESDEN
BELLE-VUE (0181-830 0822) ⊖ Willesden Green Aa Ab Laut Chalen 1pm A Bug's Life 4.45pm Holy Man 6.30pm, 9pm

WIMBLEDON
ODEON (08705 050007) BR/⊖ Wimbledon ⊖ South Wimbledon A Bug's Life 12.15pm, 2.25pm, 4.35pm, 6.45pm, 8.55pm Little Voice 4.15pm, 8.50pm Shakespeare in Love 12.10pm, 2.55pm, 5.35pm, 8.20pm Stepmom 1.45pm, 6.25pm This Year's Love 1.20pm, 3.40pm, 6.10pm, 8.40pm You've Got M@il 12.25pm, 3.10pm, 5.50pm, 8.30pm

WOODFORD
ABC (0181-989 3463) ⊖ South Woodford A Bug's Life 1.20pm, 3.40pm, 6pm Shakespeare In Love 2.45pm, 5.30pm, 8.10pm Stepmom 8.20pm You've Got M@il 2.30pm, 5.20pm, 8.15pm

WOOLWICH
CORONET (0181-854 5043) BR: Woolwich Arsenal A Bug's Life 4pm, 6.30pm, 8.40pm You've Got M@il 3.30pm, 6pm, 8.25pm

WOOD GREEN
NEW CURZON (0181-347 6664) ⊖ Turnpike Lane Daag 8.45pm Kuch Kuch Hota Hai 2pm Aa Ab Laut Chalen 5.30pm

CINEMA
REPERTORY

CINE LUMIERE Queensberry Place, SW7 (0171-838 2144/2146) Jacquot de Nantes (PG) 6.30pm La Baia des Anges (15) 9pm

ICA The Mall, SW1)0171-930 3647) Des Nouvelles du Bon Dieu (18) 6.30pm, 9.15pm Khomreh (NC) 7pm Bicycleran (U) 9pm

NFT South Bank, SE1 (0171-928 3232) La Vie Revée des Anges (18) 2.30pm, 8.45pm Les Miserables (12) 6.10pm Brothers in Law: Strictly T-T (NC) 6.15pm Early Memories of Buster: Museum Special Event)NC) 7.30pm Lucky Jim: Strictly T-T (NC) 8.30pm

PHOENIX High Road, N2 (0181-444 6789) Shakespeare In Love (15) 3pm, 6pm, 8.45pm

PRINCE CHARLES Leicester Place, WC2 (0171-437 8181) Raising Arizona (15) 1pm The Big Lebowski (18) 3.45pm Sliding Doors (15) 6.30pm Snake Eyes (15) 9pm

RIVERSIDE STUDIOS Crisp Road, W6 (0171-420 0100) Trainspotting (18) 6.45pm + The Acid House 8.40pm

WATERMANS ARTS CENTRE High Street, Brentford, Middlesex (0181-568 1176) Hideous Kinky (15) 1.30pm, 9.15pm La Vita è Bella (PG) 4.45pm, 9pm

BRIGHTON
DUKE OF YORK'S (01273-602503) Oedipus Rex (18) 1.30pm La Vita è Bella (PG) 4pm, 8.45pm Pecker (18) 6.30pm

BRISTOL
WATERSHED (0117-925 3845) La Vita è Bella (PG) 3pm, 6pm, 8.30pm Your Friends and Neighbors (18) 6.10pm The Apple (Sib) (PG) 8.20pm

CAMBRIDGE
ARTS CINEMA (01223-504444) Hilary and Jackie (15) 12noon La Vita è Bella (PG) 2.15pm, 4.45pm, 7.15pm Your Friends and Neighbors (18) 9.30pm

CARDIFF
CHAPTER ARTS CENTRE (01222-399666) Hilary and Jackie (15) 2.30pm, 8pm On Connait la Chanson (PG) 7.30pm

CHICHESTER
NEW PARK FILM CENTRE)01243-786650) Hilary and Jackie (15) 1.30pm La Vita è Bella (PG) 4.15pm

IPSWICH
FILM THEATRE)01473-215544) π (PI) (15) 6.15pm Chariots of Fire (U) 7.30pm Your Friends and Neighbors (18) 8.30pm

NORWICH
CINEMA CITY (01603-622047) Hilary and Jackie (15) 5.45pm, 8.15pm

PLYMOUTH
ARTS CENTRE)01752-206114) La Vie Revée des Anges (18) 6pm, 8.30pm Out of Sight)15) 8pm

CINEMA
COUNTRYWIDE

BRIGHTON
ABC EAST STREET (01273-327010): A Bug's Life)U); Jack Frost (PG); Shakespeare in Love (15); This Year's Love)18); You've Got M@il)PG)

ODEON (0870-207977(; A Bug's Life)U); Don't Go Breaking my Heart (PG); The Land Girls (12); Little Voice (15); Madeline)U); The Opposite of Sex (18); Shakespeare in Love (15); This Year's Love)18); You've Got M@il (PG)

VIRGIN (0541-555145); A Bug's Life)U); Enemy of the State (15); Harriet the Spy)PG); Holy Man (PG); Jack Frost (PG); Little Voice (15); Madeline (U); Shakespeare in Love (15); Stepmom)12); This Year's Love (18); Urban Legend (18); You've Got M@il (PG)

CAMBRIDGE
WARNER VILLAGE (01223-460442); A Bug's Life (U); Don't Go Breaking my Holy Heart (PG); Elizabeth (15); Holy Man)PG); Jack Frost (PG); La Vita è Bella (PG); Little Voice (15); Madeline (U); The Prince of Egypt (U); Shakespeare in Love (15); Stepmom (12); This Year's Love (18); Urban Legend (18); Very Bad Things (18); You've Got M@il (PG)

NORWICH
ABC (0541-560567); Antz (PG); Babe: Pig in the City (U); A Bug's Life (U); Hideous Kinky (15); Jack Frost (PG); Little Voice (15); Practical Magic (12); The Prince of Egypt (U); Shakespeare in Love (15); You've Got M@il (PG)

ODEON (08705-050007): Babe: Pig in the City (U); A Bug's Life (U); Madeline (U); Small Soldiers (PG); This Year's Love (18); You've Got M@il (PG)

PORTSMOUTH
ABC (01705-823538); Elizabeth (15); Enemy of the State (15); Jack Frost (PG); Shakespeare in Love (15); Very Bad Things (18)

ODEON (08705-050007); A Bug's Life (U); Don't Go Breaking my Heart (PG); Dr Dolittle (PG); Madeline (U); Mulan)U); Small Soldiers (PG); Stepmom)12); This Year's Love (18); You've Got M@il (PG)

UCI 6 (0870-603 4567); Antz (PG); A Bug's Life (U); Enemy of the State (15); The Land Girls (12); Little Voice (15); Madeline)U); The Prince of Egypt (U); Shakespeare in Love (15); Stepmom (12); This Year's Love (18); You've Got M@il (PG)

SOUTHAMPTON
ODEON LEISURE WORLD (01703-222111); Antz (PG); Blade (18); A Bug's Life (U); Don't Go Breaking my Heart (PG); Dr Dolittle (PG); Enemy of the State (15); George of the Jungle (U); Godzilla)PG); Holy Man (PG); Jack Frost (PG); Life is Beautiful (La Vita è Bella) (PG); Little Voice)15); Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels (18); Madeline)U); MouseHunt (PG); Mulan (U); The Parent Trap (PG); Practical Magic (12); The Prince of Egypt (U); Shakespeare in Love (15); The Siege (15); Small Soldiers (PG); Star Trek: Insurrection (PG); Stepmom (12); There's Something About Mary (15); This Year's Love (18); Urban Legend (18); Very Bad Things (18); You've Got M@il (PG)

VIRGIN (0541-555132); A Bug's Life (U); Jack Frost (PG); Madeline (U); Shakespeare in Love (15); This Year's Love (18); Urban Legend (18); You've Got M@il (PG)

THEATRE
WEST END

Ticket availability details are for today; times and prices for the week; running times include intervals. ● — Seats at all prices ▶ — Seats at some prices ○ — Returns only Matinees — [1]: Sun, [3]: Tue, [4]: Wed, [5]: Thur, [6]: Fri, (7(: Sat

▶ **ALARMS AND EXCURSIONS** Michael Frayn's new comedy about a dinner party which is interrupted by mysterious messages stars Felicity Kendal and Josie Lawrence. Gielgud Shaftesbury Avenue, W1 (0171-494 5065) ⊖ Picc Circ. Mon-Sat 7.45pm, [5](7) 3pm, ends 6 Mar, £19.50-£27.50, £12.50-£17.50 (restricted views). 130 mins.

● **AMADEUS** David Suchet stars as Salieri in Peter Shaffer's acclaimed drama based on the life of Mozart. Old Vic The Cut, SE1 (0171-928 7616/cc 420 0000) BR/⊖ Waterloo. Mon-Sat 7.30pm, [4][7] 2.30pm, £7.50-£30. 180 mins.

▶ **ART** Tom Mannion, Danny Webb, Gary Olsen in Yasmina Reza's comedy about three friends whose relationship is disrupted when one of them buys a work of art. Wyndham's Charing Cross Road, WC2 (0171-369 1736/cc 867 1111) ⊖ Leic Sq. Tue-Sat 8pm, [4] 3pm, (7)1) 5pm, £9.50-£27.50. 90 mins.

▶ **BEAUTY AND THE BEAST** Lavish family musical based on Disney's cartoon version of the favourite fairy tale. Dominion Tottenham Court Road, W1 (0171-656 1888) ⊖ Tott Ct Rd. Mon-Sat 7.30pm, (4)(7) 2.30pm, £18.50-£35. 150 mins.

● **BLOOD BROTHERS** Willy Russell's long-running Liverpool musical melodrama about twins who are separated at birth. Phoenix Charing Cross Road, WC2 (0171-369 1733) ⊖ Leic Sq/Tott Ct Rd. Mon-Sat 7.45pm, [5] 3pm,)7] 4pm, £11.50-£32.50, 165 mins.

▶ **BUDDY** Musical biog-show tracing the brief life of Buddy Holly. Strand Aldwych, WC2 (0171-930 8800) ⊖ Covent Garden/Charing X. Tue-Thur 8pm, Fri 5.30pm & 8.30pm, Sat 5pm & 8.30pm, mats (1) 4pm, £10-£30, half price Friday matinees. 160 mins.

▶ **CATS** Lloyd Webber's musical version of TS Eliot's poems. New London Parker Street, WC2 (0171-405 0072/cc 0171-404 4079) ⊖ Covent Garden/Holborn. Mon-Sat 7.45pm, [3](7) 3pm, £10.50-£35. 165 mins.

▶ **CHICAGO** Maria Friedman and Nicola Davies star in this hit Broadway musical about two murderous women and their nightclub act. Adelphi Maiden Lane, WC2)0171-344 0055] ⊖ Charing X. Mon-Sat 8pm, [4]|7) 3pm, £16-£36 (incl booking fee). 130 mins.

● **THE COLOUR OF JUSTICE** Dramatisation of the headline-grabbing Stephen Lawrence case. Victoria Palace Victoria Street, SW1 (0171-834 1317) BR/⊖ Victoria. Mon-Sat 7.45pm, (5) 2pm, [7] 4pm, ends 13 Mar, £5-£15.50.

● **THE COMPLETE WORKS OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (ABRIDGED)** Reduced Shakespeare Company fast-forward through 37 plays. Criterion Piccadilly Circus, W1 (0171-369 1747) ⊖ Picc Circ. Wed-Sat 8pm, [5] 3pm, [7] 5pm. [1] 4pm, £10-£25. 120 mins.

▶ **COPENHAGEN** New drama from Michael Frayn concentrating oo the events surrounding the discovery of the atom. Duchess Catherine Street, WC2 (0171-494 5075/cc 344 4444) ⊖ Covent Garden. Mon-Sat 7.30pm, [5][7(2.30pm. £10-£30. 145 mins.

● **DEFENDING THE CAVEMAN** Mark Little stars in this witty and wise comedy about the sexes. Apollo Shaftesbury Avenue, W1 (0171-494 5070) ⊖ Picc Circ. Mon-Thur 8pm, Fri-Sat 6pm & 8.45pm, £10-£25, concs available.

● **DR DOLITTLE** Phillip Schofield talks to the animals in this new stage adaptation featuring Jim Henson Puppets. London Apollo Hammersmith Queen Caroline Street, W6 (0171-416 6022) ⊖ Hammersmith. Tue-Sat 7.30pm, [4][7(2.30pm, £12.50-£32.50. 150 mins.

● **GREASE** Energetic stage version of the hit film, starring Darren Day. Cambridge Earlham Street, WC2 |0171-494 5080) ⊖ Covent Garden. Mon-Sat 7.30pm, [4](7) 3pm. £10-£32.50 150 mins.

● **AN IDEAL HUSBAND** Simon Ward and Susannah York in Peter Hall's acclaimed productioo of Wilde's comedy. Lyric Shaftesbury Avenue, W1 |0171-494 5045| ⊖ Picc Circ. Mon-Sat 7.45pm, [4] 3pm, [7] 4pm. £7.50-£29.50. 165 mins.

▶ **AN INSPECTOR CALLS** Stephen Daldry's widely-acclaimed production of JB Priestley's thriller. Garrick Charing Cross Road, WC2 (0171-494 5085) ⊖ Leic Sq. Mon-Fri 7.45pm, Sat 8.15pm,)4) 2.30pm,)7) 5pm. £12-£29.50. 110 mins.

▶ **LIFT OFF** Issues of race are explored in Roy Williams's new piece about two school leavers. Royal Court Upstairs (at The Ambassadors) West Street, WC2 (0171-565 5000) ⊖ Leic Sq. Mon-Sat 9pm, ends 13 Mar, £10, concs £5.

▶ **LITTLE MALCOLM AND HIS STRUGGLE AGAINST THE EUNUCHS** Ewan McGregor stars as the revolutionary activist in David Halliwell's drama. Comedy Panton Street, SW1 (0171-369 1731) ⊖ Picc Circ/Leic Sq. Mon-Sat 8pm,)5](7) 3pm, ends 13 Mar, £7-£27.50.

▶ **MACBETH** Rufus Sewell and Sally Dexter star in Shakespeare's masterly portrayal of thwarted ambition. Queen's Shaftesbury Avenue, W1 (0171-494 5040/cc 344 4444) ⊖ Picc Circ. Mon-Sat 7.30pm,)7) 2.30pm. ends 5 June, £10.50-£28.50.

● **THE MEMORY OF WATER** Alison Steadman and Julia Sawalha star in this touching comedy about three sisters returning home for their mother's funeral. Vaudeville Strand, WC2 (0171-836 9987) BR/⊖ Charing X. Mon-Sat 8pm, (5)(7) 3pm, £8-£27.50.

● **LES MISERABLES** Long-runing musical dramatisation of Victor Hugo's masterpiece, set during the French Revolution. Palace Shaftesbury Avenue, W1)0171-434 0909) ⊖ Picc Circ. Mon-Sat 7.30pm, (5][7(2.30pm, £7-£35. 195 mins.

● **MISS SAIGON** Musical which updates sets the *Madam Butterfly* tragedy to the war in Vietnam. Theatre Royal, Drury Lane Catherine Street, WC2 (0171-494 5060) ⊖ Covent Garden. Mon-Sat 7.45pm, (4](7] 3pm. £8.50-£35. 165 mins.

▶ **THE MOUSETRAP** Agatha Christie's long-running whodunnit. St Martin's West Street, WC2 (0171-836 1443) ⊖ Leic Sq. Mon-Sat 8pm, [3] 2.45pm, [7] 5pm, £10-£24.50. 135 mins.

● **OKLAHOMA!** Maureen Lipman stars in the National's acclaimed production of Rodgers and Hammerstein's cowboy versus farmhand musical. Lyceum Wellington Street, WC2 (0870-606 3446/cc 606 6446) ⊖ Charing X/Embankment. Mon-Sat 7.30pm, (4](7] 2.30pm, ends 26 Jun, £10-£35.

○ **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA** Andrew Lloyd Webber's Gothic musical. Her Majesty's Haymarket, SW1 (0171-494 5400/cc 344 4444) ⊖ Picc Circ. Mon-Sat 7.45pm, [4)[7) 3pm, £10-£35, 150 mins.

▶ **RENT** Musical inspired by *La Boheme* and set in modern day New York. Shaftesbury Shaftesbury Avenue, WC2 (07000-211221) ⊖ Holborn/Tott Ct Rd. Mon-Sat 7.30pm, (4)(7) 3pm, £12.50-£32.50. 160 mins.

▶ **RICHARD III** Robert Lindsay stars as the historical villain. Savoy Strand, WC2 (0171-836 8888/cc 836 0479) ⊖ Charing X/Embankment. Mon-Sat 7.30pm, [7] 2.30pm. £10-£27.50. AS

ROYAL NATIONAL THEATRE
● **LYTTELTON:** The Forest Alan Ayckbourn's new version of Ostrovsky's black social satire stars Frances de la Tour. In rep, tonight 7.30pm.

● **COTTESLOE:** The Riot Nick Darke's drama from Kneehigh Theatre. In rep, tonight 7.30pm. Lyttelton: £8-£27. Cottesloe: £12-£18. NT2000: £4, concs £3. Day seats from 10am. South Bank, SE1 (0171-452 3000). ⊖/BR Waterloo

ROYAL SHAKESPEARE COMPANY
▶ **THE BARBICAN:** Tha Tempest Adrian Noble directs Shakespeare's romance drama. In rep, tonight 7.15pm. 165 mins.

● **THE PIT:** Shadows: Riders to the Sea & The Shadow of the Glen & Purgatory Triple-bill of drama by WB Yeats and JM Synge. In rep, tonight 7.15pm, ends 27 Mar. Barbican Theatre; £5-£26. The Pit: £11-£18.50. Barbican Centre, EC2 (0171-638 8891). ⊖/BR Barbican/Moorgate.

● **YOUNG VIC:** Talk of the City Stephen Poliakoff's drama explores media control in the early days of TV and radio. In rep, tonight 7.15pm. RSC at the Young Vic: £14-£20. The Cut, SE1 (0171-928 6363). ⊖/BR: Waterloo.

▶ **SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER** Hit 1970s musical featuring legendary songs by the Bee Gees and starring Adam Garcia. London Palladium Argyll Street, W1 (0171-494 5020) ⊖ Oxford Circ. Mon-Sat 7.30pm,)4[7] 2.30pm. £10-£32.50. 135 mins.

▶ **SHOCKHEADED PETER** Brilliant junk opera, featuring the Tiger Lillies. Lyric Hammersmith King Street, W6 (0181-741 2311) ⊖ Hammersmith. Mon-Sat 7.30pm, [7] 2.30pm, ends 10 Apr, £5-£18.

● **SLAVA'S SNOWSHOW** Slava Polounine returns to London with his mesmeric show that takes all ages back to the realms of childish delight. Piccadilly Denman Street, W1 (0171-369 1734) ⊖ Picc Circ. Mon-Sat 7.30pm, [5](7) 2.30pm. £10-£27.50.

● **STARLIGHT EXPRESS** Andrew Lloyd Webber's hi-tech roller-musical. Apollo Victoria Wilton Road, SW1 (0171-416 6070) BR/⊖ Victoria. Mon-Sat 7.45pm, (3](7] 3pm, £12.50-£30. 150 mins.

○ **AMERICAN IMPORTS: THREE DAYS OF RAIN** Drama about the strange legacy left to two children by their father. Donmar Warehouse Earlham Street, WC2 (0171-369 1732) ⊖ Covent Garden. Mon-Sat 8pm, ends 13 Mar, £8-£15, mats £8.

▶ **TOAST** Richard Wilson directs Richard Bean's oew drama set in a Hull bakery. Royal Court Upstairs (at The Ambassadors) West Street, WC2 (0171-565 5000) ⊖ Leic Sq. Mon-Sat 7pm, (7] 4pm, ends 6 Mar. £10, concs £5.

● **VASSA** Howard Davies directs a new stage version of Maxim Gorky's tale of a matriarch and her downtrodden family. Albery St Martin's Lane, WC2 (0171-369 1730(⊖ Leic Sq. Mon-Sat 7.30pm, (5((7] 3pm, ends 27 Mar, £5-£29.50.

● **THE WEIR** Conor McPherson's drama is set in Ireland and examines ideas of ghosts and angels. Royal Court Downstairs (at the Duke Of York's) St Martin's Lane, WC2 (0171-565 5000) ⊖ Leic Sq/Charing X. Mon-Sat 7.30pm, (4](7] 3.30pm, £5-£25. 90 mins.

● **WEST SIDE STORY** Brand new production of Bernstein's classic musical, attempting to recreate the feel of the original Broadway hit. Prince of Wales Coventry Street, W1 (0171-839 5987) ⊖ Leic Sq/Picc Circ. Mon-Sat 7.45pm,)5))7) 3pm. £18.50-£35. 160 mins.

○ **WHISTLE DOWN THE WIND** Lloyd Webber's new musical based on the film of the same name. Aldwych Aldwych, WC2 |0171-416 6000/cc 836 2428) ⊖ Holborn. Mon-Sat 7.45pm,)5](7) 3pm, £10-£32.50. 120 mins.

● **THE WOMAN IN BLACK** Susan Hill's chilling ghost story. Fortune Russell Street, WC2 (0171-836 2238/cc 344 4444) ⊖ Covent Garden/Holborn. Mon-Sat 8pm, [3] 3pm, (7(4pm, £8.50-£23.50. 110 mins.

THEATRE
BEYOND THE WEST END

KING'S HEAD, ISLINGTON Jackson Ward Dark comedy about retired surgeons. Tue-Sun 1pm, ends 7 Mar. £5, concs £4.
The Vagina Monologues Eve Ensler performs her own aclaimed off-Broadway hit. Tue-Sat 8pm, mats Sat & Sun 3.30pm, ends 6 Mar. £12-£13. Upper Street, N1 (0171-226 1916) ⊖ Angel/Highbury & Islington.

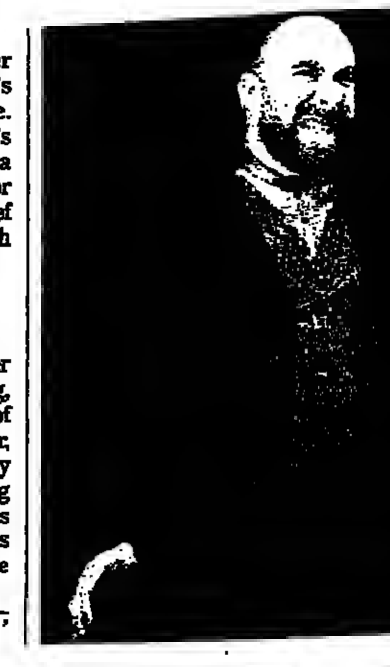
RICHMOND THEATRE The Prisoner of Second Avenue Richard Dreyfuss and Marsha Mason star in Neil Simon's comedy about a mid-life crisis. Mon-Sat 7.45pm, mat Wed 2.30pm, ends 6 Mar, phone for prices. The Green, Richmond, Surrey (0181-940 0088] ⊖ Richmond.

TRICYCLE THEATRE Paddy Irishman, Paddy Englishman and Paddy...? Premiere of Declan Croghan's new piece looking at the male of the species. Mon-Fri 8pm, Sat 4.15pm & 8.15pm, ends 20 Mar. £8-£13.50, concs available. Kilburn High Road, NW6 (0171-328 1000) ⊖ Kilburn.

FIRST CALL, LAST CALL

First Call
AFTER A SUCCESSFUL run in Stratford, Antony Sher (*right*) transfers to the Barbican in Gregory Doran's critically-acclaimed version of The Winter's Tale. Sher convincingly captures the spirit of Shakespeare's deranged King Leontes, as he first cavorts about in a whirlwind of jealous tyranny before trying to atone for his misdemeanours. Ian Hughes provides light relief as Autolycus while Emily Bruni and Alexandra Gilbraith portray the king's daughter and wife with style.
Barbican, London EC2 (0171-638 8891) until 6 May

Last Call
HAVING RECENTLY won a prestigious Laurence Olivier award, Terry Johnson's production of Cleo, Camping, Emmanuelle and Dick is enjoying the last weeks of its tour. Endorsed by *Carry On* star Babara Windsor, Christopher Fairbank, Samantha Spiro, Adam Godley and others have gone from strength to strength, giving a grittily illuminating portrait of life behind the scenes of the *Carry On* films. Sometimes bawdy, sometimes brash, often ludicrous, this work still manages to be moving. If you haven't seen it yet, do.
Newcastle Theatre Royal (0191-232 0997) to 6 Mar; Bath Theatre Royal (01225 448844) 8-13 Mar



THEATRE
COUNTRYWIDE

BRIGHTON
THEATRE ROYAL Loot Michael Elphick and Letitia Dean star in Joe Orton's black comedy. Mon-Sat 7.45pm, mat Thur 2.30pm, ends 6 Mar. £7.50-£15.50, concs available Bond Street (01273-328488)

GARDNER ARTS CENTRE Hushabye Mountain Jonathan Harvey's new play with the twin setting of Heaven and Earth. Wed-Sat 7.45pm, ends 6 Mar. £7.95-£8.95, concs available University of Sussex, Lewes Road (01273-685861)

CHELMSFORD
CIVIC THEATRE Lanza - The Last Serenade A musical tribute to legendary singer Mario Lanza. Mon-Thur 7.30pm, Fri 8pm, Sat 5pm & 8pm, ends 6 Mar. £9.50-£12, concs available Fairfield Road (01245-606505)

CHELTENHAM
EVERYMAN THEATRE Twelfth Night Northern Broadsides's accessible production, directed by Barrie Rutter. Mon-Fri 7.45pm, Sat 8pm, mats Tue & Thur 2pm, ends 6 Mar. £5-£15 Regent Street (01242-572573)

FALMOUTH
FALMOUTH ARTS CENTRE Four Hundred Jokes with the Devil Tragi-comedy about one man's failed attempt to make an epic film about Mexico. Tonight 8pm. £6, concs £4.50 Church Street (01326-212300)

HEREFORD
THE COURTYARD On the Razzle Tom Stoppard's farce set in 1850s Vienna. Tonight 7.30pm. £8.50, concs £7 Edgar Street)01432-359252)

HORNCHURCH
QUEEN'S THEATRE Our Day Out Willy Russell's nostalgic comedy. Mon-Sat 8pm, ends 13 Mar. £8.50-£12.50, concs £5.50-£10.50 Billet Lane)01708-443333)

NEWBURY
WATERMILL THEATRE More Talking Heads Janet Brown, Patricia England and Sophie Lawrence bring Alan Bennett's superb monologues to life. Tue-Sat 7.30pm, mats Thur & Sat 2.30pm, ends 13 Mar. £6-£16.50 Bagnor (01635-46044)

NORTHAMPTON
ROYAL THEATRE Dombey and Son Michael Napier Brown's adaptation of Dickens' novel about a man's obsession with his new son and his rejection of his daughter. Mon-Sat 7.30pm, mats Thur 2.30pm, Sat 5pm, ends 6 Mar. £4-£14.50 Guildhall Road (01604-632 533)

NORWICH
MADDERMARKET THEATRE Salonika An octogenarian World War One war widow visits the beach at Salonika where her husband perished. Mon-Sat 7.30pm, ends 6 Mar. £4-£6.50 St Johns Alley (01603-620917)

PLYMOUTH
DRUM THEATRE, THEATRE ROYAL The Impostor Pete Lawson's witty adaptation of Molière's comedy, *Tartuffe*. Mon-Sat 7.45pm, ends 6 Mar. £6-£9, concs available Royal Parade South (01752-267222)

POOLE
POOLE ARTS CENTRE China Song Musical fantasy based on Hans Christian Andersen's *The Nightingale*. Tonight 1.30pm, ends 6 Mar. £5-£7.50, concs available Kingland Road (01202-685222)

READING
THE MILL AT SONNING Laura Stage adaptation of the 1940s film thriller. Mon-Sat 8.15pm (dinner 6.15pm), mats Sat 2.15pm (lunch 12.30pm), ends 27 Mar. £21.95-£32.95 incl meal Sonning Eye (0118-969 8000)

SALISBURY
SALISBURY PLAYHOUSE The Birthday Party Husband and wife team Timothy West and Prunella Scales in Pinter's modern classic. Mon-Wed 7.30pm, Thur-Sat 8pm, mats Thur & Sat 2.30pm, ends 6 Mar. £8-£15 Malthouse Lane (01722-320333)

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON
THE OTHER PLACE The Dispute Marivaux's quasi-scientific drama directed by Neil Bartlett. Mon-Sat 7.30pm, phone for mats, ends 20 Mar. £10-£19, concs available Southern Lane (01789-295623)

ROYAL SHAKESPEARE THEATRE The Winter's Tala Seasonal tale of obsessive jealousy directed by Gregory Doran. Tonight 7.30pm, ends 4 Mar. £7-£30 Waterside (01789-295623)

SWANSEA
GRAND THEATRE Guards! Guards! Terry Pratchett's novel adapted for the stage. Mon-Fri 7.30pm, mat Wed 1.30pm, Sat 5pm & 8.15pm, ends 6 Mar. £6-£14.50, concs available Singleton Street (01792-475715)

TEWKESBURY
ROSES THEATRE Canterville Ghost Musical version of Oscar Wilde's satirical ghost story. Tonight 7.30pm. £8.50, concs £7 Sun Street)01684-295074)

EXHIBITIONS

BATH
MUSEUM OF COSTUME Primitive Streak; Helen Storey and Dr Kate Storey Collaboration between a fashion designer and a biologist. Mon-Sun 10am-5pm, ends 11 Apr. £3.90, concs £3.50, child £2.90, group concs. Assembly Rooms, Bennett Street)01225-477789)

BRISTOL
ARNOLFINI Accelerator Work by an international group of contemporary artists, including Hilary Lloyd, Ako Sasso and Suzy Spence. Mon-Sat 10am-7pm, Sun 12noon-6pm, ends 28 Mar, free. Narrow Quay (0117-929 9191)

CAMBRIDGE
FITZWILLIAM MUSEUM Picasso and Matisse Prints, drawings, and ceramics from the museum's collection. Ends 11 Apr.
Recent Acquisitions of Contemporary American Prints Early etchings of the East Coast, lithographs, woodcuts and screenprints. Ends 2 May.
Rembrandt and the Passion The museum's outstanding collection of prints. Tue-Sat 10am-5pm, Sun 2.15pm-5pm, ends 20 Jun, free. Trumpington Street (01223-332900)

LONDON
DESIGN MUSEUM Mini: 40 Years of a Design Icon Mini's designed by celebrities mark the 40th anniversary of the vehicle. Ends 9 May.
Modern Britain 1927-1939 A study on the important period after the Great War including the work of Francis Bacon, Paul Nash and Barbara Hepworth. Phone for times, ends 18 Jul. £5.25, concs £4 (to museum). Shad Thames, SE1)0171-378 6055) ⊖ Tower Hill/DLR: Tower Gateway

HAYWARD GALLERY Patrick Caulfield More than 50 colourful paintings by the leading British artist. Mon, Thur-Sun 10am-6pm, Tue & Wed 10am-8pm, ends 11 Apr. £6, concs £4, family £12. Belvedere Road, SE1 (0171-960 4242) BR/⊖ Waterloo

NATIONAL GALLERY Portraits by Ingres Major exhibition of paintings and drawings by the 19th-century French artist. Ends 25 Apr. £6. concs £4. Wed £4 7pm-10pm.
In the Light of Fra Angelico: Zanobi Strozzi Study exhibition exploring the paintings of the 15th-century artist. Ends 7 Mar, free.
Orazio Gentileschi at the Court of Charles I Rare exhibition exploring the work of the 17th-century Italian artist. Opens 3 Mar, Mon & Tue, Thur-Sun 10am-6pm, Wed, 10am-9pm, ends 23 May, free. Trafalgar Square, WC2 (0171-747 2885) ⊖ Charing Cross/Leicester Square

NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY Millais: Portraits Major retrospective of portraits by the Pre-Raphaelite artist. Mon-Sat 10am-6pm, Sun 12noon-6pm, ends 6 Jun. £4, concs £3. St Martins Place, WC2 (0171-306 0055) ⊖ Charing Cross.

ROYAL ACADEMY OF ARTS Monet in the 20th Century Eighty paintings made in the 26 years after 1900. Mon-Thur, Sun 9am-6pm, Fri & Sat 9am-10pm, ends 18 Apr. £9, concs £6, child (12-18) £3, child (8-11) £1.50. Burlington House, Piccadilly, W1 (0171-300 8000) ⊖ Green Park.

TATE GALLERY Art Now 17: Thomas Demand's Tunnel Looped film of travel in a tunnel explores urban life. Ends 25 Apr, free.
Works on Paper and Paintings: Francis Bacon Paintings and drawings previously kept secret. Ends 2 May, free.
When Robots Rule - The One Minute Airplane Factory: Chris Burden Installation of flying planes explores contemporary life. Mon-Sun 10am-5.50pm, ends 13 Jun, free. Millbank, SW1 (0171-887 8000) ⊖ Pimlico

OXFORD
ASHMOLEAN MUSEUM The Painterly Brush Oil sketches dating from the 16th to the early 20th century. Ends 21 Mar.
Buddhist Art from Tibet: The EM Scratton Collection Extensive collection notable for its diversity. Tue-Sat 10am-4pm, Sun 2pm-4pm, ends 2 May, free. Beaumont Street)01865-278000)

ST IVES
ST IVES TATE GALLERY Displays 1998-9: Partnerships and Practice Paintings and ceramics from the second half of the century, plus a selection of contemporary work.
Quoit Montserrat: Veronica Ryan Marble sculpture linking St Ives with Montserrat in the West Indies, the artist's birthplace. Mon-Sat 11am-7pm, Sun 11am-5pm, ends 11 Apr. £3.50, concs £2. Porthmeor Beach (01736-796226)

SWANSEA
GLYNN VIVIAN ART GALLERY Venice Through Canaletto's Eyes Twenty-three paintings and drawings by the Venetian artist. Tue-Sun 10am-5pm, ends 14 Mar, free. Alexandra Road (01792-651738/655006)

WOLVERHAMPTON
WOLVERHAMPTON ART GALLERY Disasters of War: Callot, Goya, Dix Selections from three artists' war etchings. Mon-Sat 10am-5pm, ends 20 Mar, free. Lichfield Street (01902-552055)

CLASSICAL

BASINGSTOKE
THE ANVIL Composers' Ensemble Contemporary classical meets rock. Tonight 7.45pm. £10, concs £5. Churchill Way (01256-844244)

BRIGHTON
OLD MARKET Cavalleria Rusticana/I Pagliacci New Sussex Opera stages the classic verismo double-bill. Tonight 7.30pm. £12.50-£18. Upper Market Street (01273-709709)

LONDON
ROYAL FESTIVAL HALL Maurizio Pollini Piano music by Beethoven including the *Diabelli Variations*. Tonight 7.30pm. £8-£32. South Bank, SE1 (0171-960 4242) BR/⊖ Waterloo.

WIGMORE HALL Medici String Quartet Janacek's 1st Quartet and Schubert's Quintet in C. Tonight 7.30pm. £10-£20. Wigmore Street, W1 (0171-935 2141) ⊖ Bond Street.

DANCE

LONDON
SADLER'S WELLS AT THE PEACOCK THEATRE Paco Peña Flamenco Presents La Musa Gitana World class flamenco dance, song and guitar. Tue-Sat 8pm, mat Sat, Sun 3pm, ends 7 Mar. £7.50-£35. Portugal Street, WC2)0171-863 8222) ⊖ Holborn/Temple.

PLACE THEATRE Shobana Jeyasingh Dance Company: Double Bill A double bill of new work including the premiere of *Fine Frenzy*, a new collaboration with jazz star Django Bates. Tonight 8pm. £10. Duke's Road, WC1 (0171-387 0031) ⊖ Euston.

SADLER'S WELLS Arc Dance Company Presents The Return of Don Juan Comedy with Royal Ballet star, Irek Mukhamedov. Tonight 7.30pm. £7.50-£30. Rosebery Avenue, EC1 (0171-863 8000) ⊖ Angel.

LITERATURE

BATH
JACK HIGGINS - THE EAGLE HAS LANDED Multi-millioo best-seller Higgins (aka Harry Patterson) celebrates the publication of his 50th book, The White House Connection. Guildhall - 1999 Bath Literature Festival (01225-463362) Tonight 7pm, £7, concs £6.

LONDON
MASCULINITIES IN QUESTION Andy Medhurst of Sussex University's English Department explores male identity in terms of fictional comedy. London School of Economics Kingsway WC2 (0171-955 6043) ⊖ Temple. Today 4.30pm, free.

COMEDY

LONDON
GOODNESS GRACIOUS ME AT FAIRFIELD CONCERT HALLS Award winning Asian comedy sketch show with Meera Syal, Sanjeev Bhaskar, Kulvinder Ghir, Nina Wadier. Tonight 8pm, Park Lane (0181-688 9291) £14.50.

FASCINATING AIDA - BAREFACED CHIC AT THEATRE ROYAL, HAYMARKET Cabaret trio Dillie Keane, Adele Anderson and Issy Van Randwyck. Mon-Sat 7.45pm. Sat mat 4pm, ends 6 Mar, Haymarket, SW1 (0171-930 8800) ⊖ Piccadilly Circus. £10-£22.50.

OXFORD
TOMMY TIERNAN AND JASON BYRNE AT PLAYHOUSE THEATRE Irish comedy double bill featuring the 1998 Perrier Award winner Tiernan, plus madcap comic Byrne. Tonight 8pm, Beaumont Street (01865-798600) £8, concs £6.

SOUTHEND
THE STANDING OVATION COMEDY CLUB AT THE KURSAAL Geordie gagster John Fothergill, Scottish comic Lynn Ferguson, MC Mitch Benn. Tonight 9pm. Eastern Esplanade (01245-381300) £6, mems £5.

SWINDON
ENNIO MARCHETTO AT WYVERN THEATRE The Italian paper cut out costumed entertainer. Tonight 8pm. Theatre Square)01793-524481) £8 & £10.

CLUBS

BRISTOL
REBEL MUSIC AT CLUB LOCO Hip hop, dub, breakbeat and more from DJ Apple B and DJ Init. Tonight 9pm-2am, £3.50, £2.50 in adv. Hepburn Road, Stokes Croft (0117-942 6208)

LONDON
SPACE AT BAR RUMBA Jim Masters spins disco-house. Tonight 10pm-3am, Shaftesbury Avenue, W1 (0171-287 2715) ⊖ Piccadilly Circus, £5, £3 before 11pm.

THE DOUBLE SIX CLUB AT THE OFFICE Board games and easy-listening event. Tonight 6pm-2am, Rathbone Place, W1 (0171-255 1098) ⊖ Tottenham Court Road, £5, concs £4, £3 after 11pm.

EVENTS

BEDFORD
IN THE LIMELIGHT: NORTH BE THROUGH THE MAGIC LANTE Exhibition based on Bedford's e tensive magic lantern archive, pa ticularly the work of pioneer Wal Henman. Bedford Museum Cast Lane (01234-353323) Tue-Sa 11am-5pm, Sun 2pm-5pm, free.

LONDON
A CENTURY IN THE MAKING E hibition drawn from the art and de sign archibes, drawing together wo by students and staff spanning a hu dred years. The London Institu Gallery Davies Street, W1 (01 514 6000) ⊖ Bond Street. Mon 10am-8pm, ends 10 Mar, free.

SAFFRON WALDEN
FEASTING AND FASTING EXHIB TION Examining food and drin through history. Saffron Walden Mu seum Museum Street (0179 510333) Mon-Sat 10am-5pm, Su 2.30pm-5pm, ends 14 Mar, £1, conc 50p, child free.

MUSIC
POP

BATH
THE HOLLIES Melodic rock veter ans behind hordes of hits, from "King Midas in Reverse" to "He Ain't Heavy, He's My Brother". Theatre Royal Sawclose (01225-448844) Tonight 7.30pm, phone for prices.

CHATHAM
ERROL BROWN Former Hot Choco late vocalist on his Still Sexy tour. Central Theatre High Street (01634-403868) Tonight 8pm, phone for prices.

FALMOUTH
SYMPOSIUM, FUNGUS Rambunc tious indie-rock, plus Swedish pop metal support. Pirate Inn Grove Place (01326-311288) Tonight 8.30pm, phone for prices.

LONDON
TUNC, LEONARD, KINKY JOURNO Complex indie rock headlines, with ving slacker rock from Leonard. Hope & Anchor Upper Street, N1 (0171-354 1312) Tube: Highbury & Islington. Tonight 8.30pm, £5, concs £3.50.

CLIFF RICHARD Sir Cliff's season of 40th anniversary shows continue. Royal Albert Hall Kensington Gore, SW7 (0171-589 8212) ⊖ High Street Kensington. Tonight 6.45pm, £20-£35.

E-17 East End swingbeat from Bri an Harvey's R&B trio. Shepherd's Bush Empire Shepherd's Bush Green, W12 (0171-771 2000) ⊖ Shepherd's Bush. Tonight 7pm, £15.

THE JUNKET, FARRAH, MY ASTRO LOVER Kettering's guitar-indie prospects headline. Water Rats Theatre Gray's Ino Road WC1 (0171-284 0077) BR/⊖ King's Cross. Tonight 8.30pm, £5, concs £4.

LOWESTOFT
BELINDA CARLISLE Acoustic songs from the album, *A Woman and a Man*. Marina Theatre The Marina (01502-573318) Tonight 7.45pm, £15.

MUSIC
JAZZ, WORLD, FOLK

BRISTOL
ROBB JOHNSON The prolific political singer-songwriter. Albert Inn West Street (0117-966 1968) Tonight 8.30pm, £4-£4.50.

CAMBRIDGE
PLAINSONG Enduring folk rockers special. Boat Race East Road (01223-508533) Tonight 8pm, phone for prices.

ENFIELD
SAVOY JAZZMEN 1920-style trad jazz. The Townhouse London Road (0181-367 1920) Tonight 7.45pm, £4.50, mems £3.50.

HARROW
GOLDCLEF JAZZ OPEN MIC Singers' night with Angela Elliott. Trinity Bar Stadon Road (0181-424 9888) Tonight 8pm, £3.50.

LONDON
JOHN CRITCHINSON Former Ronnie Scott pianist. 606 Club Lots Road, SW10 (0171-352 5953) ⊖ Fulham Broadway. Tonight 9.30pm, £4.95.

YORUBA JAZZ PEOPLE Afrobeat featuring Fela Kuti drummer Tony Allen. The Fridge Town Hall Parade, Brixton Hill, SW2 (0171-326 5100) BR/⊖ Brixton. Tonight 10pm, £5, £3 before 11pm.

DIANNE REEVES Jazz-soul diva. Queen Elizabeth Hall South Bank Centre, SE1 (0171-960 4242) BR/⊖ Waterloo. Tonight 7.45pm, £12.50-£17.50.

MONTY ALEXANDER TRIO The Jamaican piano populist. Ronnie Scott's Frith Street, W1 (0171-439 0747) ⊖ Leicester Sq. Tonight 9pm & 11.30pm, £12, mems £4.

SUTTON
DAVE O'HIGGINS QUARTET The dazzling post-bop tenorist. Secombe Theatre Cheam Road, Sutton, Surrey (0181-770 6990) Tonight 8.30pm, £4.

WEDNESDAY RADIO

RADIO 1
(97.6-99.8MHz FM)
6.30 Zoe Ball. **9.00** Simon Mayo. **12.00** Jo Whiley. **2.00** Mark Radcliffe. **4.00** Chris Moyles. **5.45** Newsbeat. **6.00** Dave Pearce. **8.00** Steve Lamacq - tha Evening Session. **10.00** Movie Update with Mark Ormode. **10.10** John Peel. **12.00** Gilles Peterson. **2.00** Clive Warren. **4.00 - 6.30** Scott Mills.

RADIO 2
(88-90.2MHz FM)
6.00 Sarah Kennedy. **7.30** Wake Up to Wogan. **9.30** Ken Bruce. **12.00** Juliet Morris. **2.00** Ed Stewart. **5.05** Johnnie Walker. **7.00** Nick Barraclough. **8.00** Mike Harding. **9.00** Berry Gordy's Motown. **10.00** Top of the Pops 2 on 2. **10.30** Richard Allinson. **12.00** Lynn Parsons. **3.00 - 4.00** Alex Lester.

RADIO 3
(90.2-92.4MHz FM)
9.00 On Air.
9.00 Masterworks.
10.30 Artist of the Week.
11.00 Sound Stories. See *Pick of the Day*.
12.00 Composer of the Week: Tchaikovsky.
1.00 The Radio 3 Lunchtime Concert.A concert given last October at St George's, Brandon Hill, Bristol, by the Fibonacci Sequence. Introduced by Chris de Souza. Ravel: Introduction and Allegro for harp, flute, clarinet and string quartet. Varese: Density 21.5 for solo flute. Debussy: Premiere rapsodie for clarinet and piano. Faure: Piano Quintet No 2 in C minor, Op 115
2.00 The BBC Orchestras.
4.00 Choral Evensong.
5.00 In Tune.
7.30 Performance on 3. Concluding a concert series from Glasgow which focuses on the influence of non-western sounds on the European and American classical tradition. This concert was given on Saturday in the Royal Concert Hall. Introduced by Geoffrey Baskerville. Pierre-Laurent Aimard (piano), BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra/Martyn Brabbins. Copland: El salon Mexico. Ligeti: Piano Concerto. Stravinsky: Song of the Nightingale. Ravel: Suite 'Mother Goose'.
9.05 Postscript. 3: Catalonia is a nation with its own language and history which asserts its rights to be independent of Spain and part of a wider Europe. Joe Farrell reports from Barcelona.
9.30 Wolf. Peter Schreier (tenor) and Karl Engel (piano) perform a selection of Wolf's Morike Lieder.
10.00 Ensemble. Continuing the celebrations marking the centenary of Francis Poulenc, Penny Gore presents an all-Poulenc edition, including the Elegie for horn and piano, a selection of piano pieces played by Kathryn Stott, and the rarely heard Violin Sonata performed by the young French violinist Philippe Graffin and pianist Stephen Coombs.
10.45 Night Waves. Patrick Wright talks to Kary Mullis, the Nobel Prize-winner for chemistry who is also a geneticist, mathematician, philosopher and surfing survivor of the 60s. His latest book, described as a romp through diverse fields of inquiry, is called 'Dancing Naked in the Mind Field'. The programme also includes an exploration of the function and future of the Commonwealth as it approaches its fiftieth birthday.
11.30 Jazz Notes.
12.00 Composer of the Week: Copland. (R)
1.00 - 6.00 Through the Night.

RADIO 4
(92.4-94.6MHz FM)
6.00 Today.
9.00 NEWS; Midweek.
9.45 Serial: Zarafa.
10.00 NEWS; Woman's Hour.
11.00 NEWS; Crufts.
11.30 Tomorrow at the Same Time.
12.00 NEWS; You and Yours.
1.00 The World at One.
1.30 Inspiration!.
2.00 NEWS; The Archers.
2.15 Afternoon Play: Women on Love.
3.00 NEWS; Gardeners' Question Time.
3.30 First Nights. (R)
3.45 This Sceptred Isle. (R)
4.00 NEWS; All in the Mind.
4.30 Thinking Allowed.
5.00 PM.
8.00 Six O'Clock News.
6.30 Ballylenon. (R)
7.00 NEWS; The Archers.
7.15 Front Row. Mark Lawson with the arts programme, including an investigation into that abiding stereotype - the English eccentric.
7.45 The Cry of the Bittern. An environmental drama by Tim Jackson. With Sean Baker, Rachel Atkins and Marian Kemmer. Director Peter Leslie Wild (13/30).
8.00 NEWS; The Moral Maze.
8.45 Lent Talks. 'The Dove Descending'. Writers from a variety of religious perspectives offer their views on the Easter story. See *Pick of the Day*.
9.00 NEWS; The Ramp. Building a state-of-the-art silicon chip plant is the biggest corporate poker game in the world. Peter Day reports on the process at tha heart of the new technology. See *Pick of the Day*.
9.30 Midweek. Libby Purves and guests engage in lively conversation.
10.00 The World Tonight.
10.45 Book at Bedtime: Ernest Hemingway Centenary - The Sun Also Rises. John Sharian reads Hemingway's acclaimed novel, whose protagonist, Jake Barnes, speaks for the Lost Generation of men and women drifting through a shattered Europe after the First World War (3/10).
11.00 NEWS; Truly, Madly, Bletchley. Written by Julian Dutton. A feast of entertainment from the town they forgot in the 'AA Guide to Weekend Breaks'. With Julian Dutton, Liz Fraser, Peter Hugo-Daly, Stephen Critchlow and Matthew Bell. Special guest Cleo Rocos (4/6).
11.15 MacFlintock's Palace.
11.30 Mammon.
12.00 News.
12.30 The Late Book: Stories by Anton Chekhov. (R)
12.48 Shipping Forecast.
1.00 As World Service.
5.30 World News.
5.35 Shipping Forecast.
5.40 Inshore Forecast.
5.45 Prayer for the Day.
5.47 - 6.00 Farming Today.

RADIO 4 LW
(198kHz)
6.45 - 10.00 Daily Service. **12.00 - 12.04** News Headlines; Shipping Forecast. **5.54 - 5.57** Shipping Forecast. **11.30 - 12.00** Today in Parliament.

RADIO 5 LIVE
(693, 909kHz MW)
6.00 Breakfast.
9.00 Nicky Campbell.
12.00 The Midday News.
1.00 Ruscoe and Co.
4.00 Drive.
7.00 News Extra.
7.30 John Inverdale's Football Night. Coverage of the first leg of the Champions League quarter-finals, with Manchester United playing host to Inter Milan and Dynamo Kiev visiting Real Madrid.
10.00 Littlejohn. Comment on Manchester United's clash with Inter Milan and the rest of tonight's European and domestic soccer action by calling Richard Littlejohn on 0500 909693.
11.00 Late Night Live. With Nick Robinson. Including a late news briefing at 11.00, and at 11.15 The Financial World Tonight and a topical late-night discussion.
1.00 Up All Night.
5.00 - 6.00 Morning Reports.

CLASSIC FM
(100.0-101.9MHz FM)
6.00 Nick Bailey. **8.00** Henry Kelly. **12.00** Requests. **2.00** Concerto. **3.00** Jamie Crick. **6.30** Newsnight. **7.00** Smooth Classics at Seven. **9.00** Evening Concert: A programme of works directed by the tenor Peter Schreier. Bach: Triple Concerto in A minor, BWV1044. C P E Bach CO. Schubert: Mass No 5 in A flat, D678 (Missa Solemnis). Peter Schreier Choir, Tapiola Sinfonietta. Schubert: Offertorium in B flat, D963. Peter Schreier (tenor), Bavarian Radio Chorus and Orchestra/Wolfgang Sawallisch. Benda: Flute Concerto in E minor. Patrick Gallois, C P E Bach Chamber Ensemble **11.00** Alan Mann. **2.00** Concerto. **3.00 - 6.00** Mark Griffiths.

VIRGIN RADIO
(1215, 1197-1260kHz MW 105.8MHz FM)
6.30 Chris Evans. **9.30** Russ Williams. **1.00** Nick Abbot. **4.00** Harriet Scott. **6.45** London Calling with Harriet Scott/AM Pete and Geoff. **7.30** Pete and Geoff. **10.00** Mark Forrest. **1.00** Steve Power. **4.30 - 6.30** Richard Allen.

WORLD SERVICE RADIO
(198kHz LW)
1.00 The World Today. **1.30** Meridian (Live). **2.00** World Today. **2.30** Everywoman. **3.00** World Today. **3.20** Sports Roundup. **3.30** World Business Report. **3.45** Insight. **4.00 - 7.00** The World Today (4.00-7.00).

TALK RADIO
6.00 Big Boys Breakfast with David Banks & Nick Ferrari. **9.00** Scott Chisholm. **12.00** Justice with Jacobs. **1.00** Anna Raeburn. **3.00** Peter Deeley. **5.00** The SportZone. **7.00** Offside with Seb Coe. **8.00** James Whale. **12.00** Ian Collins.

PICK OF THE DAY

THERE'S A CHANCE to hear the rated English Opera Group Ensemble recording of *Facade* – with Edith Sitwell reciting her exotic verse over William Waltoo's arch score – in **Sound Stories (11am R3)**. Noel Coward famously parodied the piece and the Sitwell clan in his revue sketch *The Swiss Family Whittlebot* but this programme takes a kinder view.

Angela Lambert (*right*) bas very little oew to say about death in **Lent Talks (8.45pm R4)** but the fact that there's still a taboo about mortality is the chief concern of her candid chat.

The Ramp (9pm R4) follows the construction of a microchip fabricatioo plant in Ireland, a veritable cathedral to new technology.

DOMINIC CAVENDISH

SATELLITE AND CABLE

SKY PREMIER
6.00 Shaughnessy (1996) (9614374). **7.45** Carpool (1996) (730339). **9.15** Cannonball Fever (1989) (36098609). **11.00** Burning Secret (1988) (20852). **1.00** Little Dorrit - Nobody's Fault (1987) (829609). **4.00** Shaughnessy (1996) (4715). **6.00** Carpool (1996) (30864). **7.30** Barry Normant's Film Night (4661). **8.00** Daylight (1996) (16086). **10.00** Blood and Wine (1997) (191067). **11.45** The Crossing Guard (1995) (223425). **1.40** The Big Man (1990) (654278). **3.35 - 6.00** Hotel Sorrento (1996) (44262297).

SKY MOVIEMAX
7.00 Movie Magic (96609). **7.30** Action Heroes (1863970). **8.15** Femmes Fatales (2595048). **9.00** Flipper (1996) (48574). **11.00** And Baby Makes Six (1979) (20670). **1.00** Movie Magic (88680). **1.30** Femmes Fatales (5941512). **2.15** Action Heroes (7086203). See *Pick of the Day*. **3.00** They Won't Believe Me (1947) (53690). **5.00** And Baby Makes Six (1979) (39425). **7.00** Flipper (1996) (49965). **8.30** E! News Week in Review (2583). **9.00** A Change of Heart (1997) (17715). **11.00** Twist of Fate (1998) (477898). **12.40** Back in Business (1996) (348939). **2.15** Cover Me (1995) (726520). **3.50** Damien - Omen II (1978) (259278). **5.40 - 7.15** They Won't Believe Me (1947) (26906100).

SKY CINEMA
4.00 Magic Town (1947) (7496067). **6.00** Jet Pilot (1957) (2899116). **8.00** Breakout (1975) (2894661). **10.00** The Towering Inferno (1974) (73851425). **12.45** Chel (1969) (2047326). **2.20** Heat and Dust (1983) (10687655). **4.30** Berlin Express (1948) (90405988). **5.55** Close.

FILMFOUR
6.00 The Train (1965) (12891390). **8.15** The Driver (1978) (6219661). **9.45** Joyride (5929244). **10.00** LA Takedown (1989) (8571203). See *Pick of the Day*. **11.40** Le Cercle Rouge (1970) (30020512). **2.00** Point Break (1991) (7302452). **4.00 - 6.00** L'Accompagnatrice (1992) (5929100).

DISCOVERY CHANNEL
4.00 Fishing Adventures (1475883). **4.30** Walker's World (1471067). **5.00** Time Travellers (5094723). **5.30** Terra X (1462319). **6.00** Wildlife SOS (1452932). **6.30** Adventures of the Quest (3385319). **7.30** The Quest (1472796). **8.00** Arthur C Clarke's Mysterious Universe (1038615). **8.30** Creatures Fantastic (5532262). **9.00** Searching for Lost Worlds (8188715). **10.00** On the Trail of the New Testament (8158574). **11.00** Navy SEALs - the Silent Option (8045425). **12.00** The Curse of Tutankhamen (9696655). **1.00** Terra X (9390655). **1.30** Time Travellers (3563839). **2.00** Close.

SKY ONE
7.00 Count Duckula (94241). **7.30** The Simpsons (80048). **8.00** The Simpsons (20777). **8.30** Hollywood Squares (29048). **9.00** Sally Jessy Raphael (22845). **10.00** The Oprah Winfrey Show (79932). **11.00** Guilty! (99796). **12.00** Jenny Jones (44845). **1.00** Mad about You (93512). **1.30** Jeopardy (64609). **2.00** Sally Jessy Raphael (77086). **3.00** Jenny Jones (59203). **4.00** Guilty! (78338). **5.00** Star Trek: Voyager (1241). **6.00** Guilty! (1715). **6.30** Friends (2067). **7.00** The Simpsons (2970). **7.30** The Simpsons (1951). **8.00** Mortal Kombat: Conquest (89932). **9.00** The X Files (59816). **10.00** Miami Uncovered (94509). **11.00** Friends (79067). **11.30** Star Trek (53654). **12.30** The Commish (21452). **1.30 - 7.00** Long Play (6228931).

SKY SPORTS 1
7.00 Sky Sports Centre (4155357). **7.15** World Wrestling Federation - Livewire (462970). **8.15** You're on Sky Sports (6237226). **9.00** Racing News (52715). **9.30** Aerobics - Oz Style (76883). **10.00** Inside Scottish Football (19574). **11.00** Max Power (39338). **12.00** Aerobics - Oz Style (32951). **12.30** Premier Snooker League (7475). **2.30** Fastrax (2226). **3.00** Inside Scottish Football (27703). **4.00** Superbouts Virgil Hill vs Jean-Marie Emebe (27628). **5.00** World Wrestling (7203). **6.00** Sky Sports Centre (1135). **6.30** Unbelievable Sports (5715). **7.00** Pool (45512). **8.00** Ringside (34116). **9.30** Unbelievable Sports (67135). **10.00** Sky Sports Centre (435864). **10.15** You're on Sky Sports (642845). **11.00** Pool (10203). **12.00** Sky Sports Centre (8038891). **12.15** You're on Sky Sports (6573094). **1.00** Rugby League World (74278). **2.30** Pool (46617). **3.30** Sky Sports Centre (4601181). **3.45** Close.

SKY SPORTS 2
7.00 Aerobics - Oz Style (5567195). **7.30** Sky Sports Centre (3372357). **7.45** Racing News (8792512). **8.15** Fastrax (5651880). **8.45** Sky Sports Centre (9670425). **9.00** Fish TV Ultimate Fishing Show (5843357). **9.30** Fish TV Fishing Tales (1529932). **10.00** Sports Unlimited (3748224). **11.00** Golf: LPGA (2971135). **1.00** Golf Extra (1544319). **4.00** Snowboarder Magazine (7661816). **4.30** Moto Cross (8209131). **5.30** Motor Sport (1061672). **6.00** Watersports (1548067). **7.00** Golf Extra (8170951). **10.00** Watersports World (9285870). **11.00** Cycling (3512932). **11.30** Ringside (6881951). **1.00** Motor Sport (3735385). **1.30** Unbelievable Sports (9322891). **2.00** Sky Sports Centre (78405966). **2.15** Close.

SKY SPORTS 3
12.00 World Wrestling (1993390). **1.00** Fish TV The Ultimate Fishing Show (3195162). **1.30** Fish TV Fishing Tales (1952154). **2.00** The Entertainers (27584574). **2.30** Superbouts Virgil Hill vs Jean-Marie Emebe (14434067). **3.00** Motor Racing: NASCAR Busch-Carolina Speedway (27503609). **3.30** Powerboat and Jet Sport World (14439512). **4.00** Figure Skating (28972680). **5.30** European Tour Weekly (14438883). **6.00** Cycling (14435796). **6.30** Fish TV Fishing Texas (14426048). **7.00** Fish TV The Ultimate Fishing Show (27588390). **7.30** Motor Racing (14115932). **8.00** Rugby League World (26978964). **9.30** Motor Racing (19940319). **10.00** FA Cup Classics (49262777). **11.30** Close.

EUROSPORT
7.30 Athletics (60488). **8.30** Nordic Skiing (90195). **9.30** Football (80154). **11.00** Football (31680). **1.00** Tennis (26222). **1.30** Nordic Skiing (41339). **3.00** Swimming (47390). **5.00** Football (48512). **7.00** Start Your Engines (30680). **8.00** Sumo (56628). **9.00** Dancing (36864). **10.00** Fitness (39961). **11.00** Start Your Engines (45999). **12.00** Luge (40891). **12.30** Close.

UK GOLD
7.00 Crossroads (8038135). **7.30** Neighbours (6102203). **7.55** EastEnders (4583672). **8.30** The Bill (3758951). **9.00** The Bill (3749203). **9.30** When the Boat Comes In (5562406). **10.30** Rhoda (3778715). **11.00** Dallas (4592883). **11.55** Neighbours (7578216). **12.25** EastEnders (2427970). **1.00** Juliet Bravo (109951). **2.00** Dallas (7325574). **2.55** The Bill (1337845). **3.25** The Bill (2101834). **3.55** EastEnders (3944319). **4.30** Rhoda (1473425). **5.00** All Creatures Great and Small (5837816). **6.00** Dynasty (1019715). **7.00** The Comedy Alternative: 2point4 Children (7256222). **7.40** The Comedy Alternative: Dad's Army (4624845). **8.20** The Comedy Alternative: The Brittas Empire (2855593). **9.00** Men Behaving Badly (1558406). **9.40** Men Behaving Badly (6347845). **10.20** Only Fools and Horses (4615357). **11.55** The Bill (1272316). **12.25** The Bill (6069346). **12.55** Dangerfield (5637181). **1.50** Dangerfield (5445742). **2.45-7.00** Shopping (7639018).

LIVING
6.00 Tiny and Crew (7991512). **6.20** 10 plus 2 (48358845). **6.40** Philbert the Frog (9892725). **6.45** Greedysaurus and the Gang (9892796). **6.50** Polka Dot Shorts (9890766). **7.00** Practical Parenting (3793828). **7.05** Professor Bubble (1868319). **7.30** Caillou (6388883). **7.35** Bug Alert (7256715). **7.55** Practical Parenting (9381777). **8.00** Barney and Friends (939154). **8.25** Babaloos (1780593). **8.30** Tiny Tales (3565574). **8.35** Tiny and Crew (4495512). **8.50** Practical Parenting (982224). **9.00** Can't Cook, Won't Cook (8609680). **9.30** The Roseanne Show - Highlights (7568864). **10.00** Jerry Springer (9634628). **10.50** Maury Povich (3223406). **11.40** Brookside (23680628). **12.10** Animal Rescue (2192542). **12.40** Rescue 911 (85903858). **1.10** Special Babies (3921864). **1.40** Beyond Belief (60776222). **2.10** LA Law (1108203). **3.10** Living Room (8943593). **4.00** Michael Cole (2651845). **4.50** Rolonda (9882116). **5.40** Ready, Steady, Cook (6577135). **6.15** The Jerry Springer Show (1221241). **7.05** Rescue 911 (4089067). **7.35** Animal Rescue (7912845). **8.10** Maury Povich (2794999). **8.00 Film:** Family Rescue (1995) (2891574). **11.00** Sex Life Down Under (7850222). **12.00** Close.

TNT
9.00 The Bad and the Beautiful (1952) (53826135). **11.15** Ice Pirates (1984) (74520357). **1.15** Alfred the Great (1969) (50792704). **3.30** Battle beneath the Earth (1967) (8274655). **5.00** Close.

PARAMOUNT COMEDY CHANNEL
7.00 Jenny (6574). **7.30** Grace Under Fire (2241). **8.00** Ellen (5222). **8.30** Spin City (4357). **9.00** Drop the Dead Donkey (1414). **9.30** Whose Line Is It Anyway? (65777). **10.00** Frasier (31222). **10.30** Cheers (40970). **11.00** Seinfeld (26999). **11.30** The Larry Sanders Show (94777). **12.00** Late Night with David Letterman (31758). **1.00** Taxi (12742). **1.30** Frontline (33723). **2.00** Dr Katz (30617). **2.30** Tibs and Fibs (42452). **3.00** Nightstand (26538). **3.30-4.00** Abbott & Costello (33704).

PICK OF THE DAY

DIRECTORS RARELY make the same film twice, but **LA Takedown (10pm FilmFour)**, a made-for-TV drama by Michael Mann (*Miami Vice*, *The Last of the Mohicans*), proved to be the template for his later release, *Heat*. Surprisingly, many critics judged the earlier work to be superior. Michael Rooker and Scott Plank take the roles later to be filled by Robert De Niro and Al Pacino of a dedicated cop who finds himself obsessed by the work of a master criminal.

Tom Cruise (*right*), occupied for the past two years by the filming of Stanley Kubrick's ultra-secretive *Eyes Wide Shut*, has not released a movie for some time. For all that, such films as *Jerry Maguire* and *Mission: Impossible*, ensures his status as Hollywood's top star. His work is examined in today's **Action Heroes (2.15pm Sky Moviemax)**.

JAMES RAMPTON

REGIONAL TELEVISION VARIATIONS

BBC1 N IRELAND
As BBC1 London except: 6.30 Newsline 6.30 (35). **9.30** Making a Difference (468932). **9.40** Jasper Carrott - Back to the Front (755970). **10.10** Lives of Our Times (848574). **11.00** The X Files (993241). **11.50** Ruby Wax Meets... Bette Midler and Liza Minnelli (638845). **12.20** Snapshot (3908100). **12.50** Film: As Good as Dead (9191988). **2.20** Joins BBC News 24 (58990181).

BBC1 SCOTLAND
As BBC1 London except: 12.30 Dotaman (92735425). **12.45** Tirean Seunta (Enchanted Lands) (21815067). **9.30** Ex-S (29512). **10.00** Cancer Stories (82593). **10.30** The X Files (106593).

BBC1 WALES
As BBC1 London except: 6.30 Wales Today (35). **10.00** Satellite City (5512). **11.00** The X Files (993241). **11.50** Snapshot - Andrew Groves (638845). **12.20** Film: As Good as Dead (8611669). **1.45** BBC News 24 (22253920).

ANGLIA
As Carlton except: 12.20 Anglia News and Weather (7695574). **1.00** Shortland Street (7224628). **1.35** Home and Away (35075357). **2.00** The Jerry Springer Show (5744932). **3.20** Anglia News and Weather (4120715). **5.00** Anglia News (51). **6.30** Whipsnade (13). **10.45** Anglia News and Weather (132951). **1.00** Film: Off Beat (116433). **4.20** The Making of James and the Giant Peach (73811471). **4.50** ITV Nightscreen (43287181). **5.00** Coronation Street (64094).

CENTRAL
As Carlton except: 12.20 Central News and Weather (7695574). **1.00** Echo Point (64086). **3.20** Central News (4120715). **5.10** Shortland Street (7202609). **6.00** Home and Away (981067). **6.25** Central News and Weather (828135). **10.45** Central News and Weather (132951). **4.20** Jobfinder (3968278). **5.20** Asian Eye (3742758).

HTV WALES
As Carlton except: 10.30 This Morning (44969864). **12.15** HTV News (4457406). **1.00** Shortland Street (64086). **1.30** Home and Away (33715). **2.00** The Jerry Springer Show (5744932). **3.20** HTV News (4120715). **5.10** A Country Practice (7202609). **6.00** Home and Away (981067). **6.25** Wales Tonight (828135). **10.45** HTV News (132951). **1.00** Film: Off Beat (116433). **4.20** The Making of James and the Giant Peach (73811471). **4.50** ITV Nightscreen (43287181). **5.00** Coronation Street (64094).

HTV WEST
As HTV Wales except: 1.00 Next Stop... (64086). **6.25** HTV West Weather (220593). **6.30** The West Tonight (13).

MERIDIAN
As Carlton except: 10.30 This Morning (44969864). **12.15** Meridian News and Weather (4457406). **1.00** Shortland Street (7224628). **1.35** Home and Away (35075357). **2.00** The Jerry Springer Show (5744932). **3.20** Meridian News and Weather (4120715). **5.10** Home and Away (7202609). **5.37** Three Minutes (618241). **6.00** Meridian Tonight (51). **6.30** Country Vets (13). **10.45** Meridian News and Weather (132951). **1.00** Film: Off Beat (116433). **4.20** The Making of James and the Giant Peach (73811471). **4.50** ITV Nightscreen (43287181). **5.00** Freestreen (64094).

WESTCOUNTRY
As Carlton except: 10.30 This Morning (44969864). **12.15** Westcountry News (4457406). **12.27** Illuminations (7603593). **1.00** Emmerdale (64086). **3.20** Westcountry News (4120715). **6.00** Westcountry Live (19135). **10.45** Westcountry News (132951). **1.00** Film: Off Beat (116433). **4.20** The Making of James and the Giant Peach (73811471). **4.50** ITV Nightscreen (43287181). **5.00** Coronation Street (64094).

YORKSHIRE
As Carlton except: 10.30 This Morning (44969864). **12.15** Calendar News and Weather (4457406). **1.00** Home and Away (41110203). **1.25** The Jerry Springer Show (4509222). **2.10** Emmerdale (9611680). **3.20** Calendar News (4120715). **5.40** News; Weather (993661). **5.55** Calendar (586512). **6.30** Tonight (13). **10.45** Calendar News (132951). **4.20** Jobfinder (6280433).

TYNE TEES
As Yorkshire except: 12.15 North East News and Weather (4466154). **12.25** Jobfink (7603593). **3.20** North East News and Weather (4120715). **5.55** North East Weather (603777). **6.00** North East Tonight (19135). **10.45** North East News and Weather (132951).

S4C
As Channel 4 except: 12.00 Bewitched (97411593). **12.30** Sesame Street (28246338). **1.00** Planed Plant (67283932). **1.30** Film: Conduct Unbecoming (62661951). **4.30** Dishes (67524135). **5.00** Planed Plant (90509661). **5.30** Countdown (67548715). **6.00** Newyddion (93864048). **6.10** Heno (96347951). **7.00** Pobol y Cwm (90529425). **7.30** Newyddion (87525864). **8.00** Ffermio: Weekly farming programme (90505345). **8.30** Pacio (90517680). **10.00** Brookside: Mick may well regret taking Jerome in. Meanwhile, Ryan offers Jason an olive branch (72081338). **10.35** Sex and the City: Miranda and friends realise things about their lovers and ponder the question: how many people are having sex with people they are ashamed to introduce to their friends? (35179241). **11.05** Michael Moore - the Awful Truth (88892338). **11.35** Mark Thomas Comedy Product (41416222). **12.10** The Spying Game (71694520). **12.40** Carry On Snogging (85615520). **1.10-4.40** Football Italia (67949452)

INDEPENDENT PURSUITS

CHESS

JON SPEELMAN

ON SATURDAY I played in an absolutely splendid tournament, an event that is, as far as I know, unique: the fourth edition of the Dutch Open Blitz Championship.

Situated in Dordrecht, just south of Rotterdam, with primary sponsorship from the Financial Plannning Organisation (FPO) in Rotterdam and additional help from several local firms, this consisted of exactly 200 players including 16 grandmasters, headed by Alexei Shirov, with other players ranging right down to ooe poor gentleman rated 1,200 – that's 75 BCF – who scored just 4/34.

Yes, 34! For between a little after the projected 10am and 6.30pm when they finished smack on time, they fitted in no fewer than 17 double rounds – in which you play the same opponent with both colours. At a time limit of five minutes each per game that gives 20 minutes' playing time per round, yet these started promptly at 25-minute intervals and there were even a lunch break of 35 minutes and two shorter ones of 20 minutes each later on in the day.

The organisation that achieved this near-impossible feat consisted of 26 people, including the two arbiters; and I was told that they even had two dress rehearsals at a local school hall to ensure the requisite smoothness. With specially written software, the pairings could, once all the results had been entered, be completed in seconds; and these were then displayed on five large screens, strategically placed so that milling around was kept to an absolute minimum.

As you may well imagine, there was a colossal amount of both bloodshed and fun. In the end, it was Rafael Vaganian, an Armenian now resident in Germany, who ended up clear first on 25/34. He was followed by Tiviakov on 24, Lautier, Baklan and myself on 23.5, Gurevich on 23, Van Wely and Schmalz on 22.5 and Shirov on 22. (I was fortunate that in the penultimate round my opponent took my king – the correct procedure was to stop the clocks and claim the game – which in this event was deemed to be an immediate draw!)

The games on the top board were recorded oo an electronic board. Generally, blitz games often contain tactical errors but can be quite clean positionally. Here is a particularly clean win by Vaganian. After some beavy opening theory he won a pawn and then showed splendid technique.

White: Rafael Vaganian
Black: Loek van Wely
Neo-Grunfeld

1 Nf3 Nf6	23 Qe3 Rxc3
2 c4 g6	24 Qxc3 Nc6
3 g3 Bg7	25 Qe3 e5
4 Bg2 0-0	26 Qxb6 Qe7
5 d4 d5	27 Rd5 h5
6 cxd5 Nxd5	28 h4 Rc8
7 0-0 Nb6	29 Bh3 Rc7
8 Nc3 Nc6	30 Qc5 Qf6
9 d5 Na5	31 Qd6 Qxd6
10 Qc2 c6	32 Rxd6 Nd4
11 dxc6 Nxc6	33 Bf1 Rc1
12 Rd1 Bf5	34 Kg2 Rc2
13 e4 Bd7	35 Bc4 b5
14 Qe2 Qe8	36 Bd5 Kf8
15 Be3 Rc8	37 Rf6 Rc7
16 Rac1 Bg4	38 Rb6 Kg7
17 h3 Bxf3	39 a4 bxa4
18 Bxf3 Ne5	40 bxa4 f5
19 Bg2 Nec4	41 a5 Rc2
20 Bxb6 axb6	42 a6 Ra2
21 b3 Bxc3	43 Rb7+ Kf6
22 Rxc3 Na5	44 a7 1-0

BRIDGE

ALAN HIRON

HAVING READ somewhere that, if you can see only four defensive tricks against a contract of 3 no-trumps it may pay not to cash them all immediately, East tried what proved to be a highly profitable deception on this deal.

South opeoed One Heart and North bid Two Clubs. As this response at the Two level promised sensible values, South jumped to 3 oo-trumps and all passed.

West led ♠3 (fourth highest), dummy played low, and East's jack held the trick. He continued with the ace of spades and then stopped to think. The spade position was clear to him but, if he continued the suit, the defence would surely have run out of steam after taking their four tricks.

Instead of leading a third spade, East switched to a low heart. South fell for it. On the assumption that East held no more spades, the contract was safe against any distribution. He won the heart in hand and, to guard against four or more clubs with either East or West, led a club and finessed dummy's ten.

Oh dear! Not only did East turn up with the jack but he was able to produce a third spade as well, for his partner to win two more tricks.

Love all; dealer Sooth

North
♠Q 7 6
♡9 5
◇8 7 2
♣A K Q J 0 9

West	East
♠K 8 5 3	♠A J 2
♡J 2	♡Q 10 8 4
◇J 9 5 3	◇10 6 4
♣6 5 2	♣J 8 3

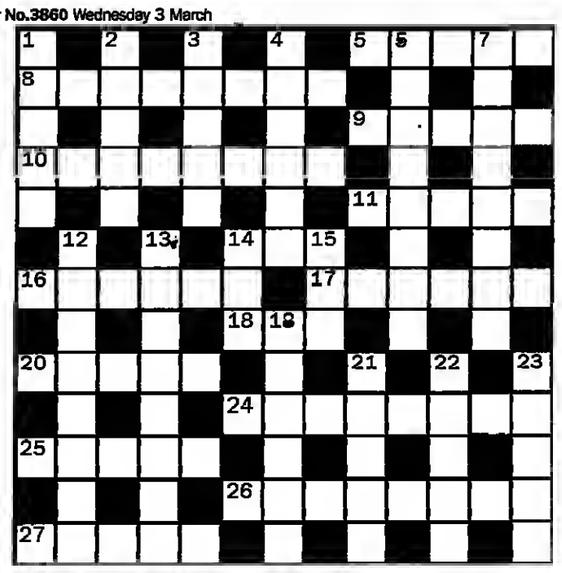
South
♠10 9 4
♡A K 7 6 3
◇A K Q
♣7 4

As you can see, if the defenders had started by cashing their four spade tricks, there would have been no reason at all for South to take what he thought was the safety play in clubs.

Warning! This sort of defence may not be a good idea against moderate opposition in pairs play. The cunning defence may see declarer, without a care in the world, simply cashing his 10 tricks to leave you with very few match points...

CONCISE CROSSWORD

No.3860 Wednesday 3 March



ACROSS
5 Love affair (5)
8 Be untruthful (4,4)
9 Staff of life (5)
10 Widespread outbreak of disease (8)
11 Tobacco leaf rolled for smoking (5)
14 Large deer (3)
16 Yacht berthing area (6)
17 Young bird (6)
18 Tease (3)
20 Saying (5)
24 Danger (8)
25 Broadcast (2,3)
26 Refusal to face reality (8)
27 Punctuation mark (5)

DOWN
1 Horse (poet.) (5)
2 Tartan cloth (5)
3 Slumber (5)
4 Forgivable (6)
6 Wedding (8)
7 Unexpectedly (8)
12 Spanish dance (8)
13 Flag-waving (8)
14 Attention (3)
15 Barrel (3)
19 Disinclined (6)
21 Throwing weapoo (5)
22 Rail transport (5)
23 Member of small race (5)

Solution to yesterday's Concise Crossword:
ACROSS: 1 Sharper, 5 Roans (Chaperones), 8 Until, 9 Numeral, 10 Neuralgia, 12 Dab, 13 Docker, 14 Cajole, 17 Lea, 18 Means test, 20 Gainsay, 21 Niche, 23 Tiger, 24 Recited.
DOWN: 1 Spum, 2 Act, 3 Pulsate, 4 Renege, 5 Rumba, 6 Aerodrome, 7 Soluble, 11 Unceasing, 13 Delight, 15 Arsenic, 16 Lawyer, 18 Miser, 19 Tread, 22 Cat.

ROBERT HANKS
TELEVISION REVIEW

THE THING ABOUT the story of the ant and the grasshopper; is the grasshopper had all the fun. Your Money or Your Life (BBC2) takes Mr Micawber's great dictum – "Annual income twenty pounds, annual expenditure nineteen nineteen six, result happiness. Annual income twenty pounds, annual expenditure twenty pounds ought and six, result misery" – and shows how wrong he was. Every week, Alvin Hall, a flamboyant, faintly camp and screamingly benevolent American financial guru, performs a kind of financial makeover on two people. He began this week with two extremes.

At one end of the financial respectability scale stood Natalie Hill, who was several thousand pounds in debt and sinking further daily. Cameras followed her around for a week, as she skipped in and out of black cabs, wafted her credit cards around Selfridges and French Connection, wolfed pastries at her local bakery and chatted endlessly to friends on her mobile phone. Under beaming interrogation from Hall, with snapshots offering irrefutable proof of her grasshopper lifestyle, it rapidly became clear that while her finances might be shaky, she had shored them up with a sturdy scaffolding of self-delusion. When asked about her weekly expenditure on snacks, she guessed half the true figure; ditto when she estimated how much she spent on her mobile phone. Hall prowled through her house, pouring scorn on her over-stuffed wardrobe ("Let me tell you, black pants are black pants no matter how many pairs you own"), raising an eyebrow when he noticed her only cookbook seemed to be that of the River Café. She promised to change – more home-cooking, fewer pairs of trousers, buying a phone-card – and a month later seemed to be doing reasonably well.

Simon Rawlinson, on the other hand, was a model of financial rectitude. At an age when most young men are wasting their cash on *Viz* and *Loaded*, the cameras caught him at home poring over the latest *What PEP?*; buying a round at the pub but asking everyone else to chip in. At 23, he was saving £900 a month and had it all in rock-solid investment plans. Hall, who believes that money is meant to be used, tried to coax him out of his anthill – take a few financial risks, buy some new clothes (he placed Simon's dress sense "somewhere between accountant and funeral director").

Simon was a much harder nut to crack than Natalie. Asked who he would, in his dreams, want to spend his hard-scrimped cash on, the best he could come up with was Carol Vorderman. Hall tried to tempt him with thoughts of an Aston Martin, but you could tell Simon wasn't really bitten. With this starved, debilitated fantasy life, he had little incentive to change.

It has to be said that on this occasion, Mr Micawber's formulation didn't work – debt may have threatened Natalie's long-term welfare, but, in the short term, expenditure stayed off unhappiness. For Simon, happiness seemed to be a not entirely welcome threat to stability and security. Given the choice, wouldn't most people plump for being the grasshopper? Chirrup, chirrup.

Close Up (BBC2) uncovered a whole new layer of fantasy: "LA Stories" followed four young British expatriates who had gone to Hollywood to make it as screenwriters, seduced by fantasies about selling fantasies. The sad part was, their fantasies didn't seem all that, well, fantastic. Partly this is the fault of Hollywood, which likes the familiar as long as it's not too familiar: Sacha's hairdressing comedy had been sold to the studios as "*Rocky* with curlers"; Miles and his friend Alfred were plugging their romantic thriller *Yesterday* as "*Somewhere in Time* meets *Ghost*", but were careful to point out that aspects of it were "sort of like a *Field of Dreams*-type thing". Meanwhile, Tina was labouring on *Nine Lives*, a story about a man who turned into a cat that sounded something like *Groundhog Day* meets *The Incredible Journey*.

Little by little, "LA Stories" degenerated into a compilation of clichés about how Hollywood disregards writers, punctuated by some frankly dull stories about brushes and near-brushes with success or with successful people. Shapeless and tedious, the film itself came across as sort of *The Loved One* meets *Ishtar*. With all this screenwriting talent on hand, that seemed surprising. Then again, when Hollywood disregards writers, maybe it knows exactly what it's doing.

BBC1

6.00 Business Breakfast (67406). **7.00** News (T) (38203). **9.00** Kilroy (S) (T) (2951883). **9.46** The Vanessa Show (S) (T) (7419845). **10.55** News; Regional News; Weather (T) (3400609). **11.00** Change That (S) (3410086). **11.25** Can't Cook, Won't Cook (S) (T) (3430845). **11.55** News; Regional News; Weather (T) (7366883). **12.00** Call My Bluff (S) (81884). **12.30** Wipeout (S) (4934241). **12.55** The Weather Show (S) (T) (5307824). **1.00** News; Weather (T) (39390). **1.30** Regional News and Weather (59907116). **1.40** Neighbours (S) (T) (35047574). **2.05** Ironside (R) (5268319). **2.55** Through the Keyhole (R) (S) (T) (4566834).

3.25 Children's BBC: Playdays (R) (S) (6804116). **3.45** Little Monsters (S) (5466715). **3.50** Chucklevision (S) (T) (4892661). **4.10** See It, Saw It (S) (T) (5834970). **4.35** The Wild House (S) (T) (3488319). **5.00** Newsround (S) (T) (4143845). **5.10** Blue Peter (S) (T) (9830932).

5.35 Neighbours. Is Harold jealous of Bouncer? (S) (T) (358339).

5.00 News; Weather (T) (83).

6 PM **6.30 Regional News** (T) (35).

7.00 Holiday on a Shoestring. Hold on to your hats as "crazy" Eamonn Holmes goes on a canal holiday (S) (T) (4932).

7 PM **7.30 Tomorrow's World.** A new invention that could save new-born babies from brain damage (S) (T) (19).

8 PM **8.00 Changing Rooms.** An episode grandly subtitled "France", as Carol Smillie and her cohorts cast about for fresh victims (S) (T) (3680).

8.30 Comic Relief Jukebox. Archive comedy clips chosen by celebrities and viewers (S) (T) (383241).

8.50 National Lottery – Greatest Hits (S) (252932).

9 PM **9.00 News; Regional News; Weather** (T) (7721).

9.30 Jasper Carrott – Back to the Front. The latest stand-up series from a comedian whose best days were a lifetime ago. A dim audience laughing too hard can't mask the poor material (S) (T) (29512).

10.00 The X-Files. Mulder hunts a terrorist group that may have got hold of a deadly virus (S) (T) (640390).

10 PM **10.50 Ruby Wax Meets... Bette Midler and Liza Minnelli.** Wax goes shopping in Hervey Nichols with Bette Midler and flies to Nashville to try to locate Liza Minnelli (R) (S) (T) (236654).

11.20 Snapshot – Andrew Groves. The designer prepares for London Fashion Week (S) (T) (249715).

11.50 FILM **As Good as Dead** (Larry Cohen 1995 US). Thriller about two women who swap identities so that one can benefit from the other's medical insurance. It's a TV movie, by the way (S) (270425).

1.15 Joins BBC News 24 (93820704). To 6am.

BBC2

6.10 The Emergence of Greek Mathematics (2317809). **6.35** The Location Problem (5487593). **7.00 Children's BBC:** Pingu (R) (7879884). **7.05** Teletubbies (S) (3186244). **7.30** Snorks (8731777). **7.50** The Really Wild Show (S) (T) (3649045). **8.20** Taz-Mania (S) (5437338). **8.40** Polka Dot Shorts (1485086). **8.50** Pingu (R) (1474970). **9.00** Images (S) (7003058). **9.30** What? Where? When? Why? (S) (7083222). **9.26** The Art (S) (4741512). **9.45** Words and Pictures (S) (8112222). **10.00** Teletubbies (R) (S) (34357). **10.30** Numbertime (S) (9664796). **10.45** Cats' Eyes (S) (9852951). **11.00** Around Scotland (S) (3880796). **11.20** The Geography Programme (S) (T) (3537796). **11.40** Science in Action (S) (T) (6918777). **12.00** Revista (S) (5633338). **12.15** Hallo aus Berlin (S) (4453680). **12.30** Working Lunch (95690). **1.00** Brum (R) (S) (8830416). **1.10** The History Hour (R) (S) (9350645). **2.10** Awash with Colour (S) (5682616). **2.40** News; Regional News; Weather (T) (3672406). **2.45** Westminster (S) (T) (8188574). **3.55** News; Regional News; Weather (T) (8523664). **4.00** Kaye (S) (6533241). **4.25** Ready, Steady, Cook (S) (T) (6543628). **4.55** Esther (R) (S) (T) (5528809). **5.30** Today's the Day (S) (T) (12).

6.00 Star Trek: The Next Generation. Our step-headed hero falls in love with a beautiful intergalactic space babe (R) (S) (T) (954999).

6.45 Buffy the Vampire Slayer. Has a ventriloquist's dummy been harvesting organs from classmates performing in a talent show? (S) (T) (358086).

7.30 Sophia Grigson's Herbs. La Grigson puts parsley in a Middle Eastern salad and mint in a creamy cheesecake (S) (T) (61).

8.00 University Challenge. Balliol College, Oxford, and Birkbeck College, London scrap for a place in the quarter-finals (S) (T) (1222).

8.30 Looking Good. Lowri Turner (If ever a woman was born to be a painter...) reports on bargain prices for tailor-made suits (S) (T) (9947).

9.00 Modern Times. Stylish film about Kings Hill, the latest manifestation of a modernistic suburban vision in Kent (S) (T) (869512).

9.50 Trouble at the Top. Profiling the editor of Russian *Vogue* and her mission to sell the notion of beauty to the Russian people (S) (T) (603796).

10.30 Newsnight. Paxman bites yer legs (T) (710845).

11.15 CHOICE **A Living Hell.** Deep and moving analysis of depression presented by Professor Lewis Wolpert. See *Documentary of the Day*, below (S) (519338).

12.00 Despatch Box (S) (82075). **12.30** BBC Learning Zone: Open University – The Chemistry of Creation (41094). **1.00** The Chemistry of the Invisible (85075). **1.30** The Chemistry of Creativity (22094). **2.00** Schools: Dance (38297). **4.00** Languages: Discovering Portuguese 5-6/Portuguese Discovered (90839). **5.00** Business and Training: RCN Nursing Update (6098817). **5.46** OU: Is Seeing Believing? (4983588). To 6.10am.

ITV Carlton

6.00 GMTV (5115241). **6.26** Trisha (S) (T) (8347970). **10.30** This Morning (T) (57905241). **12.20** Your Shout (7695574). **12.30** News; Weather (T) (95636). **1.00** London Today (T) (64066). **1.30** The Jerry Springer Show (S) (T) (6169883). **2.15** Home and Away (S) (T) (411086). **2.45** Wheel of Fortune (S) (T) (410357). **3.15** ITN News Headlines (T) (4190574). **3.20** London Today (T) (4120715).

3.26 Children's ITV: Mopatop's Shop (4110338). **3.36** Teddybears (9163951). **3.46** Jumanji (R) (S) (T) (9831845). **4.10** Whizzwig (T) (8518574). **4.40** Mad for It (2416512).

5.10 Home and Away (S) (T) (7202609).

5.40 News; Weather (T) (658828).

6.00 London Tonight. Regional news update for the capital and the South-East(T) (61).

6.30 London Bridge. London-based drama serial (S) (13).

7.00 Emmerdale. Yorkshire folk. Tricia and Mandy are put on the spot (S) (T) (9628).

7.30 CHOICE **The Big Match – Uefa Champions' League Live: Manchester United vs Inter Milan.** Bob Wilson presents live coverage from Old Trafford of the first leg of the quarter-final, as Alex Ferguson's men try to reach the semi-final as they did two years ago. With commentary from Clive Tyldesley. See *Match of the Day*, below (T) (95758932).

8.45 Coronation Street. Kevin goes missing – the nation hopes that no-one locates him (S) (T) (390154).

10.15 News; Weather (T) (382135).

10.46 London Tonight (T) (132951).

10.56 Murray Walker's Top Ten. Old shouty-voice nominates his top Grand Prix drivers since the world championship began in 1950 (857715).

11.55 The Big Match – Uefa Champions' League Highlights (T) (901863).

1.00 FILM **The Super** (Rod Daniel 1991 US). Leaden comedy starring Joe Pesci as an unscrupulous landlord who is sentenced to house arrest in one of his own apartments (S) (T) (118433).

2.35 The Big Match – Uefa Champions' League: Real Madrid vs Dynamo Kiev (562384). **4.20** ITV Nightscreen (6280433). **5.30** News (63756). To 8am.

Channel 4

5.00 Sesame Street (60116). **7.00** The Big Breakfast (52241). **9.00** Channel 4 Schools (131796). **11.30** Powerhouse (T) (4154). **12.00** Sesame Street (T) (74574). **12.30** Bewitched (R) (S) (T) (32086). **1.00** Pet Rescue (S) (T) (62626). **1.30** The Three Stooges (37575131).

1.50 FILM **Lease of Life** (1954 Charles Frend UK). Robert Donat stars as an impoverished, terminally ill vicar who spends his last days raising money for his daughter's education. Not as mawkish as it sounds, thankfully (T) (75658135).

3.30 Collectors' Lot (T) (39). **4.00** Fifteen to One (S) (T) (18). **4.30** Countdown (S) (T) (3405086). **4.65** Rickl Lake (S) (T) (5513777).

5.30 Pet Rescue. Two very shy puppies arrive at RSPCA Woodside – no sudden, loud noises now (T) (80).

6.00 Ready Steady Cook. Gledroyc and Perkins are joined by celebrity chef Gary Rhodes (17777).

7.00 Channel 4 News; Weather. Including headlines at 7.30pm for the soap watchers among you (S) (T) (242088).

7.55 The 1999 Citibank Private Bank Photography Prize. The work of Portuguese snapper Augusto Alves Da Silva (T) (140338).

8.00 Brookside. Mick regrets taking in Jerome, while Nikki is determined to get her life back on track (S) (T) (6390).

8.30 Doors to Manuel. New travel series reporting on short breaks in some of the world's greatest cities. New York is first up, and features a trip to Dean and Delucca for a Monica Lewinsky cookie (5425).

9.00 ER. Dr Green receives some family news which could be described as "difficult" (S) (T) (5135).

10.00 Sex and the City. Sex-based New York sitcom which isn't as clever as it likes to think it is. Tonight, Jaime Carrie examines secret sex (S) (T) (75203).

10.30 CHOICE **Michael Moore: The Awful Truth.** Our hero battles "corporate crime" in the first of a subversive new series. Kenneth Starr is targeted tonight. See *Investigation of the Day*, below (T) (84951).

11.00 Mark Thomas Comedy Product. Second part of a rather radical hour as the nation's self-appointed political conscience rouses the rabble (T) (5406).

11.30 Go Graham Norton (R) (T) (140357). **12.10** Boardsquipid Goss Skiing (R) (4399520). **1.10** Football Italia – Mezzanotte (23380075). **3.40** Transworld Sport (R) (2044452). **4.40** Defenders of the Wild (R) (4865549). **5.35** Rat-a-Tat-Tat (R) (4981100). **5.55** Sesame Street (4576810). To 7am.

Channel 5

5.00 5 News and Sport (1703406). **7.00** WideWorld (R) (S) (T) (8396999). **7.30** Milkshake! (S) (2611425). **7.35** Wimzie's House (R) (4890154). **8.00** Havakazoo (R) (S) (2013777). **8.30** Dappledown Farm (R) (2012048). **9.00** Hot Property (R) (S) (T) (8860195). **9.25** Russell Grant's Postcards (R) (4672796). **9.30** The Oprah Winfrey Show (7130375). **10.20** Sunset Beach (S) (T) (3869338). **11.10** Leeza (S) (6369767). **12.00** 5 News at Noon (S) (T) (2018664). **12.30** Family Affairs (R) (S) (T) (1494066). **1.00** The Bold and the Beautiful (S) (T) (6388970). **1.30** The Roseanne Show (R) (S) (1493357). **2.00** 100 Per Cent Gold (S) (9372086). **2.30** Good Afternoon (S) (1970574).

3.30 FILM **Indict and Convict** (Boris Sagal 1974 US). Made-for-TV courtroom drama starring William Shatner as a DA on a murder rap (4895311).

5.20 Sunset Beach. Amy fantasises about being in a hot tub with Sean – for those of you on medication, don't worry: it's meant to be like this (S) (T) (3943864).

6.00 100 Per Cent. Monotonous quiz show (S) (2616087).

6.30 Family Affairs. Has Claire been physically abused by Pete? Pam thinks so (S) (T) (2607319).

7.00 5 News, Including First on Five. National and international news with Kirsty Young (S) (T) (9343574).

7.30 Nick's Quest. Nick Baker is the latest presenter to dispel the myth that vampire bats are exclusively blood-sucking nasties. He reports from Costa Rica (S) (T) (2696203).

8.00 Switched at Birth. Made-for-television drama – you can generally tell by the title – based on the true story of two Florida girls who were taken home by the wrong parents and raised in the wrong households for a decade. If it has a director, he/she isn't winning up (S) (T) (67374338).

10.10 FILM **Rambo III** (Peter MacDonald 1988 US). The third and last in the Rambo series continues the deterioration shown in part two as Sylvester Stallone battles Soviet invaders in Afghanistan. He's been to Thailand to learn about Buddhism, grown his hair a bit, and is holed up in a monastery – one reviewer at the time described his appearance as "a Caravaggio Christ with pecs". But when the call comes to rescue his former Vietnam commanding officer, Stallone can't resist. It's not grown up and it's certainly not clever (7659680).

12.00 Melinda's Big Night In (S) (7913278). **12.40** UK Raw (S) (4686810). **1.10** Ice Hockey: St Louis Blues vs Chicago Blackhawks (S) (64720520). **4.40** The Movie Chart Show (R) (S) (92459029). **5.05** Move On Up (R) (S) (32191181). **5.30** 100 Per Cent (R) (S) (6908433). To 6am.

TELEVISION GUIDE BY PETER CONCHIE

MATCH OF THE DAY

THE BIG MATCH: MANCHESTER UNITED VS INTER MILAN (7.30pm ITV) Never mind match of the day, this is the match of the season – the most exciting match involving a British side since England played Argentina in the World Cup. David Beckham *(right)* and Diego Simeone, the man who so effectively ruffled Beckham's feathers that day, meet again. Alex Ferguson has a full team to choose from, including Roy Keano who was missing from last year's Champions' League campaign because of injury, and Ryan Giggs. Ronaldo is definitely not playing, but Baggio and Djorkaeff will still be a handful for defenders Jaap Stam and Ronnie Johnsen. Can't wait.

INVESTIGATION OF THE DAY

MICHAEL MOORE: THE AWFUL TRUTH (10.30pm C4) Michael Moore *(right)* presents more laconic militancy in a format familiar to viewers of the *Mark Thomas Comedy Product* – amusing confrontations shown to a studio audience. Moore organises a very funny witch-hunt of Kenneth Starr, as a band of puritan maids chase the special prosecutor's car down the street objecting to the obscene content of his report. Later, a man who was denied a pancreas transplant by his health insurance company gets even – handing out invitations to his forthcoming funeral outside company HQ. Radical without being bullish, a trick that Thomas has yet to pull off.

DOCUMENTARY OF THE DAY

A LIVING HELL (11.15pm BBC2, *right*) "Depression is a wimp name for what is a raging condition," claims Marjorie Wallace of the mental health charity SANE. To a backdrop of rainy pavements and falling leaves, Professor Lewis Wolpert explores a condition that one in five people will suffer from at some point in their lives. Wolpert goes back to the Royal Free Hospital in north London where he was treated for depression, an experience that he describes with disarming candour as being worse than the death of his wife. This responsible and nerve-touching look at a taboo subject is complemented by a confidential helpline which opens at the end of the programme.